

伝説の勇者の伝説 6

シオン暗殺計画

鏡 貴也




富士見ファンタジア文庫

イラスト とよた瑠織

ルシルはフェリスの頭をなでてる。
「ん？ 私は、褒められてるのか？」
「……………いや、君は愛されてるんだよ」

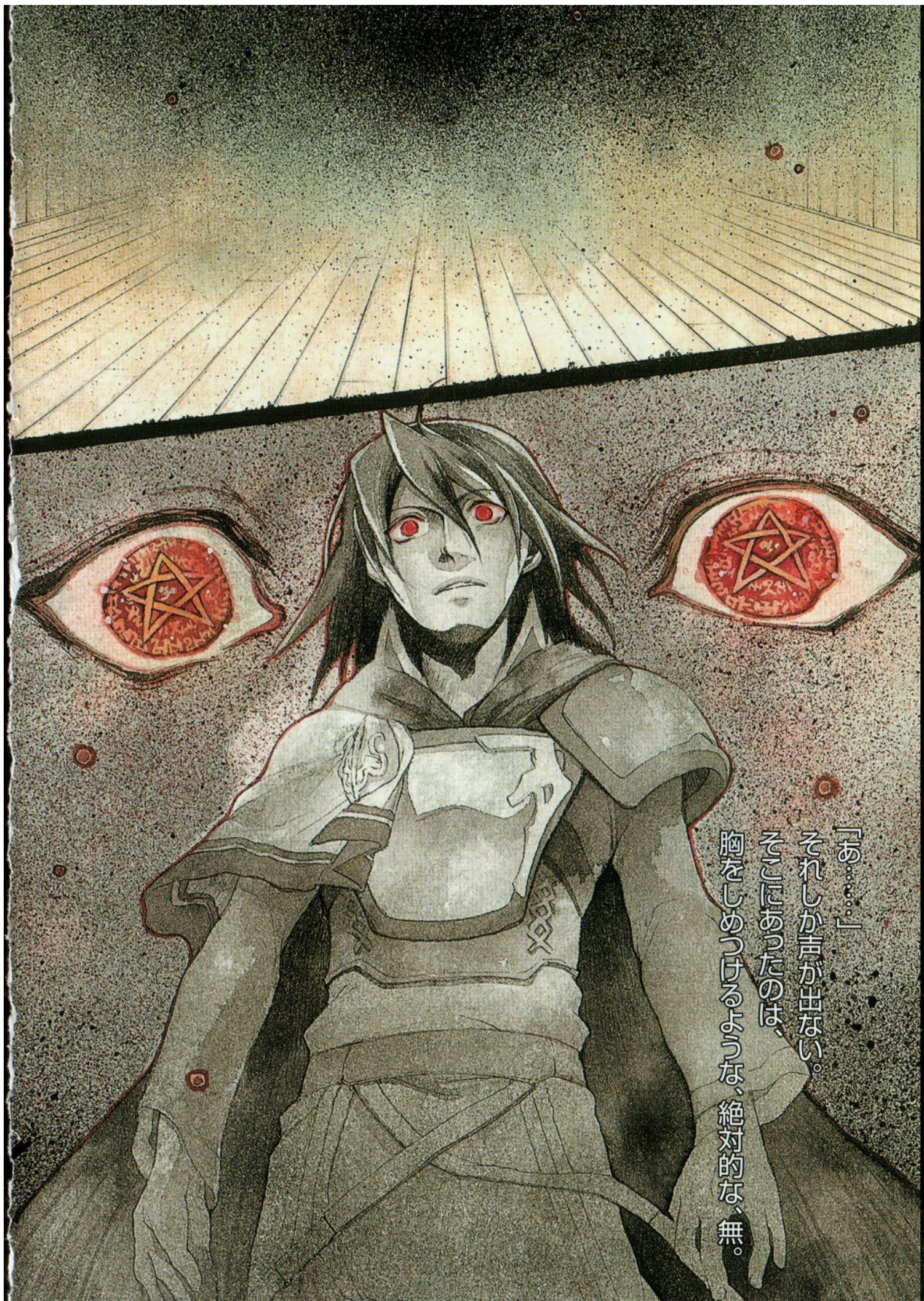
伝説の勇者の伝説 6

シオン暗殺計画

A character with long white hair, wearing a white and blue outfit, is lying on a red floor. A large book is open next to them. The character's right hand is extended towards the book. The scene is depicted in a dramatic, high-contrast style with bold colors and expressive brushstrokes.

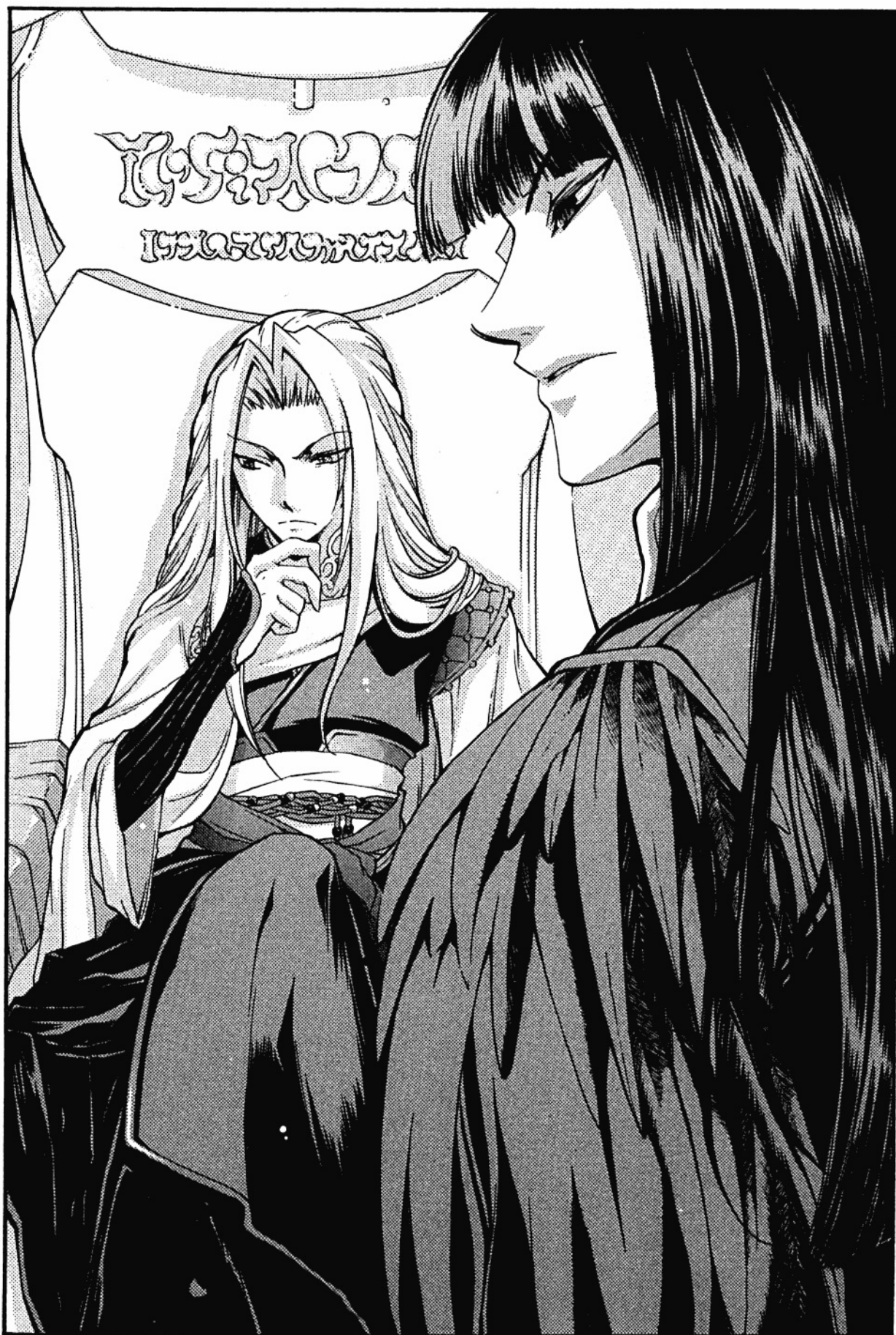
「上等だ。やってやろう」
そして、小さく息を吸い、強く吐き出すと同時に、
扉を開け放ち、中へと入る！



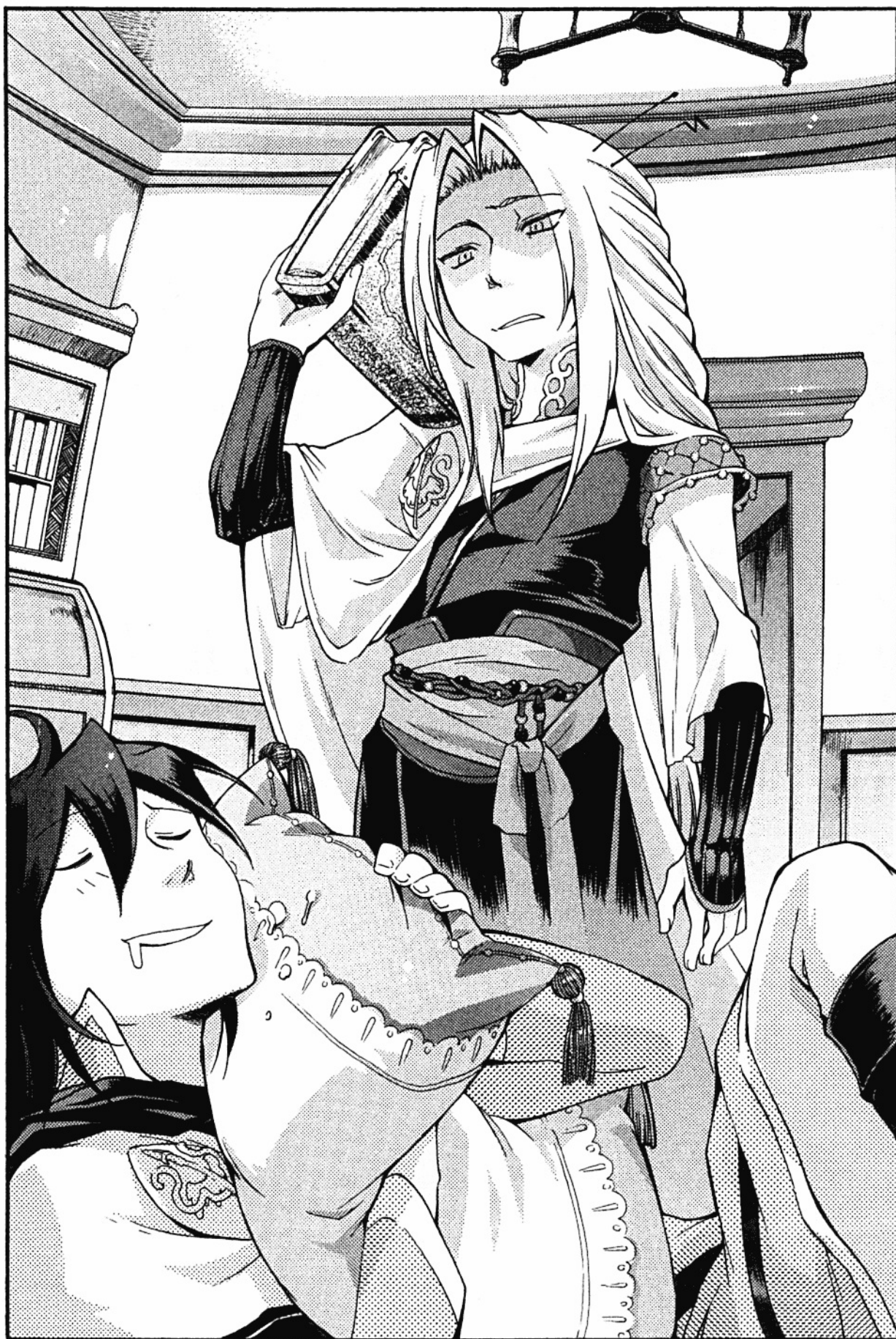


「あ……」
それしか声が出ない。
そこにあったのは、
胸をしめつけるような、絶対的な、無。





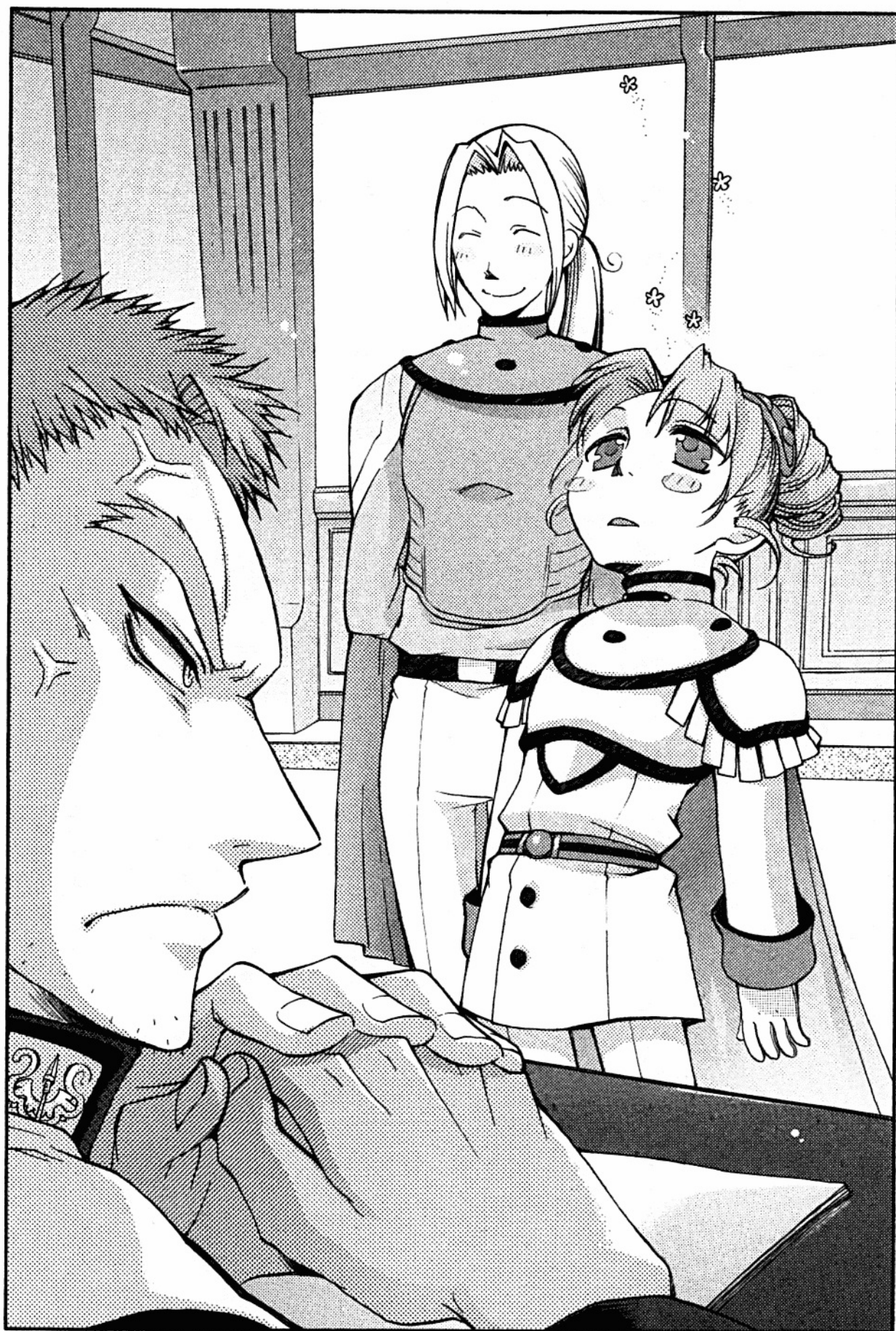














Chapter 1 - The Unsmiling Goddess

"I love you."

On hearing those words, my body could not move.

"I love you from the bottom of my heart."

On hearing those words, my body could not move.

"I love all and every part of you."

On hearing those words, my body.....

My body could not move due to the overwhelming fear.

That which was known as love.

Was something she feared.....

Just as she thought, that something was called love.

If that was love, just as she thought, it was nothing but despair.

If she's not mistaken.

Incidentally, there was that particular verse which she recalled.

There was a burst of light.

And she saw a fleeting dream.

It was in fact about something that just happened yesterday.

"I love..... you."

Looking at that written verse,

"..... love?"

The young girl tilted her head to one side.

She was an unbelievably pitiful girl.

With glossy, long, blond hair, and fair skin that appeared almost translucent.

With long eyelashes, and almond-shaped blue eyes.

An incredibly beauty.

Only a fourteen year old young girl, if she were to be seen by a stranger, that person would probably find it hard to believe that she is actually human.

A fairy.

Or even a beautiful ghost.

Whichever the case, the beauty of Ferris Eris is something out of this world.

She looks way too perfect.

But that beauty.....

Looked more like that of a well-made doll.

Her face was expressionless.

It was emotionless.

Like a doll.

It was as if her heart had been forgotten somewhere, that beauty was cold and inanimate.

A lifeless beauty.

No, it was not just her alone. Everyone here.....

Their hearts were dead.

Ferris, with her child-like eyes which carried a very slight tinge of doubt, said.

“This ‘love’ thing that is written here, what is it? [Niisama](#).”

“Hn?”

Before her was a young man who was reading a book, and he looked up.

He seemed to be a few years older than Ferris.

With the same blond hair, and the same almond-shaped eyes that seemed to be even more emotionless than those of Ferris.

Though those eyes appeared to reflect nothing, Ferris knew very well that those eyes were watching everything at all times.

Her elder brother, Lucile Eris.

He closed the book he was reading, a book which was written in a difficult ancient language, smiled thinly at her question, "Ferris does not know anything about love?"

He said with a quiet, a very quiet voice.

But that was a strange statement.

Because there was no way she could have known.

Ferris knew nothing about love.

In fact, she knew nothing about other emotions as well.

This was such a place.

The Eris House.

One of Roland's larger noble houses.

Known as the Eris swords clan, for generations, they had been tasked to become the protector of the king of this country.

Everything else was meaningless to them.

The reason for this was because in this place.....

Again, with a quiet voice, Lucile said,

"The thoughts and feelings I have for Ferris, must most definitely be love."

"Niisama's feelings? Niisama, you love me?"

"Of course. We are siblings after all. That goes the same with Tousama, Kaasama, and Iris as well. We all love you."

"....."

Her eyes became clouded again.

She looked at her own body.

She was wearing a clean, white [dougi](#), and whatever skin that was left exposed were covered with wounds and bruises.

They were marks left behind after her daily swordsmanship training, wounds inflicted by her father, mother, and Lucile.

Wounds.

Wounds.

Wounds.

Wounds.

Aside from that, her life was filled with nothing else.

Every morning, immediately after waking up, it was training time.

The day only ended when she could no longer move.

Only to get stronger.

Only to get stronger.

Only to get stronger in order to not disgrace her clan.

She was taught nothing else.

Rather, it was not necessary to teach her anything else.

That was the only thing that mattered here.

Only to get beaten up, cut up on a daily basis.

“Is that love?”

Lucile stood up and returned his book to the shelf, then he gazed at her for a while.

With a definite gentle voice,

“Is the training too tough to bear?”

Ferris shook her head. She did not think that way. She had never once thought that the training was tough.

In the first place, she was never taught how 'tough' felt.

That's why even when she knew that her parents thought of her as an unneeded existence, she never felt any kind of bitterness, not even slightly.

Even when Lucile had yet to reach their father's strength, he was considered a talent who would not put the family to shame.....

And compared to that Lucile, when their parents knew that it's impossible for her to catch up to him, she became merely trash in their eyes.

But the training continued.

On and on, without knowing when it would ever end, what could only be described as an insanely tough training continued.

Even then, Ferris had never once thought that the training was tough.

Because she did not know what that emotion meant.

That's why she shook her head.

Lucile grinned,

"Is that so? Ferris is such an admirable girl."

He stroked her head.

"Hn? Did I just get praised?"

But he only continued to gently stroke her head for a while, then,

"..... no, you are being loved."

He said.

Ferris closed her eyes.

It felt good to be stroked on the head.

At the very least, it felt far better than getting beaten up or cut up.

While her head was being stroked, Ferris said.

"I see. This is love....."

Lucile said happily.

"Yes. This is love."

“Hm. It’s not bad. Does Niisama want to be stroked?”

“Ahahahaha.”

“Hn? Why are you laughing?”

In response to Ferris’s astonished reaction, Lucile stopped,

“Nothing, it’s just that I was thinking how cute Ferris is.”

“Hn? Am I cute?”

“Yes, you are cute. That’s why I love you.”

“Is that why you stroke my head?”

“Yes.”

“Then, let me show my love to Iris as well.”

After saying that, as she got up to head towards her younger sister, Iris’s room, Lucile laughed again.

“Ah. Your hair looks disheveled right now, make sure you straighten it out.”

“Alright.”

Then, Ferris started to make her way out of the library.....

But, she abruptly turned around.

Lucile was still looking in her direction.

With gentle eyes. With clear, blue eyes like those of Ferris.

Ferris asked.

“Niisama, do you want to come and love Iris?”

However.

Lucile shook his head slightly.

“There’s something I need to attend to soon. Both you and Iris should quickly go to bed.”

“Something to attend to? What is it?”

To her query.....

Without changing his expression, a gentle faint smile floated on Lucile's lips.

"I'm going to go see the abyss of the world."

"..... abyss?"

She could not comprehend.

Well, Lucile's words were always hard to comprehend in the first place.

Seeing her tilting her head to one side with a bewildered expression, and how she made an effort to grasp the meaning of his words, Lucile smiled again.

"It's fine, there's nothing for you to worry about. Now, go to bed. You still need to wake up early tomorrow."

After being told that,

"Okay."

Ferris acknowledged obediently and the conversation ended.

And she left the room.

She headed towards Iris's room. She quelled her presence in order not to wake Iris up and entered her room.

She sat beside the bed which lay her cute sleeping sister, and gently stroked her head.

Iris opened her eyes slightly.

"..... munya..... ah!? Neesama! Are you going to sleep with me!? Ya....."

Even as she woke up energetically in an instant, Ferris continued stroking her head, giving her a nice and warm sensation, "Ya..... yay~..... Neesama..... I really..... like..... fummyu....." (sounds of pleasure from Iris) She hugged Ferris and fell asleep.

With a very slight smile, while still stroking her head, Ferris climbed into the bed.

There was not much time left to sleep.

She hardly had any free time for herself. After training, if she spent time reading, she would have less time to sleep.

However, things could become bad if she didn't get sufficient sleep.

Each day's training was like having a brush with death.

If she even let her guard down one bit, she could die.

In order to survive, she did not need any unnecessary emotions inside of her.

Love.

Friendship.

Romance.

Pain.

Bitterness.

Sadness.

She had to seal all her emotions, and undergo the training with indifference.

That's how she would pass every single day of her life.

However.

As Ferris was stroking Iris's head, she murmured.

"Hm. So this is love."

With that, she tried hugging Iris's body for a bit.

The body of the five-year old felt warm. Even though it's only for a bit, she could tell the pleasantness of the sensation from that warmth.

"..... hm."

And she shut her eyes.

Darkness.

For an instant in that total darkness, she remembered her brother's words.

The abyss of the world.

Just as she thought, it was something beyond her comprehension.

But, whatever it was, it's fine.

Because the next time she opened her eyes again, the same daily routine

would start once more.

It was always the same.....

That was what Ferris was thinking.

However, the truth was.....

Once again, there was a burst of light.

As that was happening, awareness returned to her body.

The first sensation was that of giddiness.

Following that was an intense amount of pain.

As Ferris started to stand up, she got smacked on the head by a wooden sword, which sent her flying.

And she tumbled onto the floor, rolling,

“Argh..... ah.....”

She cried out involuntarily from the intense pain.

As she tried to get up, her knee gave way, and it seemed like she could not move a single muscle.

She shut her eyes for a moment, and concentrated.

First, she needed to verify which parts of her body had taken damage, and then remove her consciousness from them, effectively extinguishing the feeling of pain.

The pain disappeared immediately. She was already used to doing that.

But the wounds were terrible.

She had several fractured bones.

The biggest problem was the injury to her head. The first strike robbed her of consciousness, but in the short instant that she was unconscious, it seemed like she was further struck on the head several more times.

Her head was wobbling and her body did not seem to be listening to her.

It was bad.....

She thought.

If this carried on, she would die.....

In front of her, stood her father and mother who were both looking despondent.....

Bearing the trait of the Eris family, both had golden hair, blue eyes, and a beauty which belonged outside of this world.

But the beautiful faces looked twisted.

Looking at her despondently, her mother said.

“As always, you are disappointing. Inheriting the Eris blood..... rather, inheriting the blood of your prodigy father and myself, why could you not even stop this level of attack?”

She raised her sword slowly.....

Immediately,

“Ku.....”

Ferris prepared herself with her own wooden sword.....

Well, while she was readying herself, her mother’s sword already reached her.

Somehow she managed to parry, once, twice, thrice.....

No, there was no third time.

“..... your swings are monotonous and slow.”

Thereafter.

A slapping sound was heard on Ferris’s left arm.

“.....!?”

Her eyes went wide.

It broke.

And it was not just her arm, but her bones and tendon.....

She felt an intense sharp rising pain.

She was about to scream out involuntarily.....

But before she could do that, her mother's sword smashed into her face and Ferris was sent sprawling on the floor.

Looking at Ferris, her mother said.

"Well now, you can't get up anymore? Is this the end? How unsightly..... truly unsightly. I'm so ashamed. For me to have given birth to a good-for-nothing like you....."

She was used to those words.

Unsightly.

Ashamed.

Good-for-nothing.

"How is it that a child like you was born unto us?"

Each time she was undergoing training, she would be berated in that manner.

"How is it that, after Lucile, we would give birth to a good-for nothing like you?"

Not a trace of bitterness.

She had never felt bitter about those words.

To put it more accurately, she was never taught about the emotion of feeling bitterness.

That's why she did not feel bitter.

She did not feel bitter.

She did not feel bitter.

She did not..... want to feel bitter.

Because if she held such a thought, she would not be able to get back on her feet again.

If she carried a trace of such an emotion, she would once again be called a

fool, a good-for-nothing.

That's why Ferris did not feel bitter.

In order not to bring shame onto the name of the Eris House, whatever the circumstances, one must never lose his calm, never feel pain, and never lose his elegance.....

And that led her to losing her facial expressions.

No matter how bitter it felt, how painful it felt, she would always exhibit that expressionless look.

"..... I'm getting up right now."

She said with a shaking voice, but the wooden sword came again.

The sound of a bone being broken was heard again. Her left shoulder was immobilized.

After she realized that, her mother said.

"Is it really..... is it really okay to use such a good-for-nothing, I wonder? I'm kind of worried."

And her father,

"Even so, I still have some expectations....."

He said as he gazed at the Ferris who was sprawled onto the ground.

With the same blue eyes.

Embedded within those blue eyes, was a deep despondent look.

"The existence of someone who is not suited for this Eris House is not needed. You should already know that by now."

Of course she knew.

Ferris looked up at her father.

And,

"..... am I to be killed?"

Her father shrugged his shoulders,

“That possibility exists..... But, I love you. Because, even if you are a good-for-nothing, you are still my adorable daughter.”

That was what he said.

Her father said he loved her.

Ferris squinted her eyes.

Lucile did mention something like that just the day before.

"That goes the same with Tousama, Kaasama, and Iris as well. We all love you."

She remembered those words.

Love.....

Just as she thought, at that moment, it was something she could not comprehend.

But, with that kind of despondent and disappointed look, if she had not yet been killed up until now, was it because they loved her?

Her mother said.

“But for such a good-for-nothing, can she really give birth to a suitable child?”

Her father replied.

“Well, at the very least, Ferris inherited the blood of you and I, who were known as the prodigy siblings that had not appeared ever since the Eris family was founded. Now, if I mix in my own blood again, the possibility does exist, doesn't it? Anyway, it is necessary to have a child who can surpass me. Even though as it is of now, in time, it may be possible for Lucile..... but it's not enough. Since when I was Lucile's age, I had already surpassed our father.”

“But that was because Niisama is a prodigy. Ah, if only I am able to carry Niisama's child once more.....”

As the conversation was unfolding.....

Ferris, however, could not understand what they were talking about.

Child?

Siblings?

What was that all about.....

But her mother just looked in her direction and said.

“Truly, you should feel honored. For you to be able to carry your father’s child..... now, what are you waiting for? Take off your clothes.”

Ferris was thrown into confusion at those words.

“Tousama and Kaasama, what are you saying.....”

But her mother just frowned,

“Ah, this is exasperating..... this dunce..... who in the world does she take after? That’s enough, quickly take off your clothes.”

She was told.....

But her body could not move.

Something in her was resisting.

Something in her was feeling fear.

Her body was shaking.....

“Quickly, take them off.”

And she.....

Sprung to her feet, and broke into a run.

The words of Lucile were spinning in her head.

Round and round.

Round and round.

“That goes the same with Tousama, Kaasama, and Iris as well. We all love you.”

Those words were circling in her head.

Love.

Love.

Love.

But while those words were churning in her head, she felt nauseous.

She felt a kind of emotion that she had never felt before, fear.

That was fear.

From behind her, her mother's voice rang out.

"A dunce indeed....."

She should have been running away from this place with all her might, but right before her, her mother appeared.....

Ferris, with her still able right hand, raised her wooden sword, and struck out with all her strength.

But still.

In a swift moment, Ferris's wooden sword was broken into two pieces by a slash from her mother's wooden sword, and furthermore, her right arm was broken by the impact as well.

"Do you think that the sword of a dunce like you can even scratch me?"

And with a few fast strokes from her mother's wooden sword, her clothes were ripped into shreds and she was thrown onto the floor.....

With a grip on her hair out of nowhere, somehow, she was thrown onto the floor.

It was futile.

The difference in strength was simply too great.

And on top of that, her father was much stronger than her mother and Lucile.

With her strength, there was nothing Ferris could do.

But even so, she wanted to escape from this place.

An overwhelming amount of fear was spreading throughout her.....

She was afraid.....

Her mother said.

“Here you go, Niisama.”

She was afraid.....

Her father nodded, and he took his sash off his garments.

She was afraid.....

Ferris struggled frantically.

However, she could not even twitch a muscle.

Both her arms were broken, and furthermore she was restrained by her mother.....

“Ugh..... ugh.....”

She wanted to cry out.

But the fear was so great that she lost her voice.

She could only shiver.

She seemed about to groan.....



“U, uwahh..... ahh.....”

Her father quietly stretched his hand out towards her.

He stretched out his hand towards the stark-naked Ferris, and was about to touch her.

The next moment.

She thought she lost her mind.

And it was not due to her father's touch.

The whole world turned red before her eyes.

Truly, everything was red.

But, she immediately realized that it was blood.

It was the blood of the person who was restraining her, her mother.

She saw the body of her mother hit the ground, making a 'thud' sound. But it was only the body.

There was no head.....

Before her, her father's expression changed.

“Na..... y, you.....”

That was all he said.

And a quiet voice, a really quiet voice.....

That voice, that voice that could kill, that voice with a strong feeling of oppression.

“..... well well, Tousama. This won't do. As a member of the Eris House, you shouldn't show such a face just because something of this level happened. Otherwise, you might be called a dunce, you know?”

It was Lucile.

But he was standing quite a distance away from where Ferris was.

Hanging from his hand, was the head of their mother, with a twisted look of fear.

On hearing that, their father returned to his normal calm expression and looked intently at Lucile.

“..... well? What in the world are you trying to accomplish? I’m well aware that you’ve already surpassed your mother. But to interfere with me, do you think you would live through this?”

Lucile smiled thinly.

It was the same smile as always.

It was the same smile that Ferris knew too well.

However, that was not what she saw now.

It was more of a smile from the depths of darkness, the smile of a demon.....

“Now, what should we do about this.”

As expected, he said it with a quiet voice.

On hearing that, their father looked delighted.

“I see. Are you saying that you have already surpassed me? So that’s what it’s all about. If that’s the case, then you can be the one to mate with Ferris.....”

“Don’t you defile my cute little sister with your vile nonsense.”

Lucile glared at his father.

On saying that, their father’s face changed. He had that same disgusted look their mother did.

“..... I see. You are also a good-for-nothing who knows nothing about the Eris House.”

As he said that, he took up their mother’s wooden sword from the floor.

And then.

“I have no use for a good-for-nothing.”

After saying that, he disappeared.

At the very least, that was how it appeared to Ferris.

She could not catch up to his movement with her eyes at all. That movement

[illegible]

Laughing madly.

Laughing madly.

Laughing madly.

Ferris was fearful.

Their father, with a shaking voice,

“Don’t, don’t tell me you……”

On hearing that, Lucile, with a scoffing tone, said.

“You called me a good-for-nothing who knows nothing about the Eris House? The one who knows nothing should be you, eh? Everything has ended, my useless father. The curse of our incestuous practices, the duty of the Eris House, all shall end with my generation. I, alone, shall bear the whole curse. Thus, you decrepit folks of the past, may now exit this stage and rest in peace.”

Their father raised an arm,

“What, what in the world are you talking about? You are mad. That thing.....
that thing.....”

His arm dropped down.

And that was the end of everything.

Their father's body was ripped into shreds, with body parts scattered around the place.

Everything became red once again.

Ferris could not move.

Given the circumstances..... she was probably saved by Lucile.

But Ferris could not move.

She could only shiver.

She could only shiver at the sight of her brother.

Their father was dead.

Their mother was dead.

Bathed in the blood of their parents, covered in red, with a gentle expression, Lucile turned around.

“Now..... there’s no longer anything to fear, Ferris. Everything has ended. From now onwards, I shall protect you.”

On hearing those words.

Ferris suddenly remembered the verse she saw yesterday.

Chapter 1: I found him

That place was like a haven.

The sun rays that spilled onto the grounds were so warm and comfortable.

Time passed slowly and steadily.

The sounds that could be heard, were the sounds of waves hitting and retreating from the desolate beach, and the cries of the sea birds.

“Ah...”

Ryner Lute said:

“...This looks really bad.”

He said that, but his voice was so lazy.

Black hair that was unkempt from sleep.

A tall lean figure that was slightly hunched, for some reason actually wearing a weird fighting outfit consisting of white armour and a long robe that only the Roland Mage Knight Battalion were allowed to wear...

He lay on the sand with a lazy posture that lacked the feeling of nervousness.

“Anyway, things are bad~”

Anyway, things really were bad.

His companion turned her head when she heard that.

Golden long hair that sparkled with golden light under the sunlight, coupled with pale skin that was as smooth as porcelain.

Long eye lashes, and slim blue eyes.

Beautiful features that could oppress people.

A beauty that was too perfect, like a fairy.

But that type of beauty... It was like an intricately carved doll.

There were no expressions on her face.

There were no feelings expressed on her face.

A face like a doll's.

A lifeless beauty that was as if the heart was left somewhere.

But, Ryner was very clear—

He was clear on the actual personality of the woman who was as beautiful as a fairy, Ferris Eris.

And he didn't know what Ferris was so happy about...

Since just now she carefully dodged the waves that pounded upon the shore, playing a game of chase with the waves.

But because Ryner spoke, she was distracted, and caused her feet to be wet...

She turned that expressionless beautiful face to Ryner, using her clear voice to say a single sentence: "I'll kill you."

"Don't kill me."

Ryner only replied her with that sentence, not taking Ferris's words seriously.

He was already used to it.

Ferris heard that, staring at Ryner's face for a moment...

Then she raised her head to the boundless sky, that made people feel happy.

"Ugh."

She nodded then, as if understanding something.

Although Ryner didn't know what she had comprehended...

Following that Ferris looked at him again, saying:

"So? What's bad?"

"Eh? Ah, it's that. You asked me what's bad? I realized something terrible just now."

"Realised?"

“Eh, realized. It’s so great that you can say that it’s a truth of the world, and a discovery that is not too exaggerated. Ah, I really am extremely talented! I seem to be able to solve any questions now, it turns out that I am actually this talented... Do you want to listen to my discovery?”

“Uh, try to tell me about it.”

Ryner heard that, pointed at the sky.

“Then look at the sky. What thoughts do you have?”

Ferris looked straight at the sky.

“What do you mean by thoughts?”

“The weather is good, right?”

“The weather is good.”

“The sky is very blue?”

“Eh.”

“It’s very pretty, right?”

“Eh.”

“And the sound of the waves is very peaceful... It feels so good, doesn’t it make you not want to think of anything, making you feel like you can’t help it but want to have an afternoon nap, as you sink into the sand?”

But Ferris was clearly unable to understand Ryner’s meaning...

She tilted her head and said:

“...Is that so?”

But Ryner didn’t heed her, continuing:

“Then now you can recall some of the past, right? Remember when we were in Runa, the period where we asked Iris to bring Arua and the others back. At that moment you suddenly said that sentence—“The two of us can finally be alone”... Do you remember?”

“I don’t.”

“Liar! I clearly felt that from the beginning, I was living in hell...”

At this point let me tell everyone, the conversation at that time was like that

—

“The two of us can finally be alone.”

“...Eh? Ehhh what did you say! Why did your tone of voice suddenly become so feminine?”

“Eh? The tone of a young girl’s love exploding, indeed it suits the tastes of the legendary pervert right?”

“No no no, I don’t understand the meaning of your words. ‘The legendary pervert’? What is that?”

“Uh, ah, you don’t have to think in such a complicated way. I only feel that, we have to hurry to catch up with the delayed progress. I am thinking, we should seriously find the Heroes’ Relics.”

“Oh, seriously? Catch up with the progress? Then, how do we catch up?”

“Uh, in any case, it is ‘flirting’. It’s simple, right?”

Ryner remembered this conversation, and couldn’t help but frown.

“You think that we can suddenly barge into the castle in Runa, convince the Runa princess, to snatch the **Heroes’ Relic** necklace? It’s impossible. And we wasted a lot of time for nothing— turning an entire mountain into nothing at one time, then wasting our time to ascend the mountain, and then wasting time and not eating, spending that wasted time on the disgusting people from the neighbouring Iyet Republic.”

If someone asked us, in the end did you get the **Heroes’ Relic**? The answer would be not even one. In the end we were flushed into the sea by the flood of water, after going through dangerous encounters, the place that we got to was actually Roland that we made a loop back to, and the land that belonged to your family...

The truth that I discovered, what did you think of it?”

“Uh? In the end what are you trying to say?”

“Ah, I said that, in the end these few months, we have been so busy, what one earth were we busy with? Didn’t things turn out like this?”

Ferris heard that, still she tilted her head uncomprehendingly.

“Is that so?”

“Isn’t it? Because of that? I am only taking this as an example, if we hadn’t separated from Arua, and returned to Roland together, then coming with the two of us to this island for a vacation, lying on the beach comfortably like this for two months, happily having afternoon naps, wouldn’t the situation be the same? Don’t you feel that that’s remarkable?”

Ferris heard that, simply saying.

“Anyway it’s that right? Your life is worthless?”

“.....Don’t say that so quickly.....”

Ryner said in a depressed manner.

But, Ferris nodded when she heard that.

“But, this truth is indeed quite impressive.”

“I said it right? Then, we can continue thinking from here. Why are we always forced to do such lame things? I think, let’s start deducing from ‘the special column on speculating on the culprit’.”

Ferris was momentarily deep in thought.

She closed her expressionless eyes slightly...

Then immediately bam, she hit her palm.

“It’s that right? I remembered that the places that you went to would have cases of women being abused, so you entered a situation where you couldn’t stay in the same place, and had to ‘run’ continuously, am I right?”

Ryner heard that, nodding forcefully.

“Yes! Everything is because of Sion that person who is clear on our weak

points, ordering to do troublesome things like gathering the **Heroes' Relics** and whatnot!"

He completely ignored what Ferris said.

She heard that—

".....You, you....."

Saying that, like usual, she reached to the sword at her waist.

But—

"Ah, I'm already tired of that section of words from you."

In that moment—

Ferris actually revealed a face that she had received a blow.

Ryner laughed when he saw that.

"Yo? Are you a little affected?"

Ferris heard that, strangely revealing a fearful expression and said:

"Urgh, this... that... I, I see! You brought me to this sort of desolate island, what are you thinking of doing?!"

".....Ah, don't try to forcefully think of things going in that direction..."

Ryner said with a stunned expression. But, Ferris refused to let go of it. For some reason, she said with a slightly nervous expression: "I, I know it! Because I saw it in the library the previous time... 'Abuse-the desolate island classroom—men in the academy on the desolate island, depending on their instincts and doing as they like...'"

"How can there be an academy on a desolate island! Speaking of which, don't place those kind of books in the library!"

In the moment that Ryner shouted this, in the midst of the waves hitting the shore...

Ferris allowed her beautiful shining golden hair to fly back, speaking with a triumphant expression that would make another person feel strangely angry: "Heh."

“...Urgh, what are you humphing over? Did I, I lose something?”

“You have always lost it. A loser losing masculinity.”

“.....Ah..... Now I am unwilling that a little time has been wasted.....Forget it, if that makes you happy, then let’s leave it... Ne, can I continue speaking?”

Ferris spoke as she walked back from the shore:

“I know what you want to say—let us think of a plan to deal with the king that person, right?”

“That’s right! It’s that! It’s clear, the culprit of everything that has happened is that person, isn’t it? Causing us to work so hard every day...”

“Uh. And that king actually took my favourite dango store as hostage, threatening me ‘if you don’t listen to my command, I will destroy the dango store’... Taking the dango store as hostage, how many weak women and sisters will cry...”

“Uh.....I don’t think that many women and sisters will cry with the dango store being taken as hostage... But, anyway that’s that! In the end because of that person, we are forced to do such troublesome things!”

“Uh!”

“Then, what can we do to rid ourselves from that person’s curse?”

“Assassination!”

“Correct answer!”

The two of them reached this conclusion quickly.

But in these few months, this was not their first time coming to this conclusion, so now that they had not easily returned to Roland, that they would reach this conclusion was obvious too...

But, the conclusion this time was different from the past.

Ryner stood up aggressively, saying with much motivation:

“This time, I’m serious! Come, let’s go to the capital to kill Sion!”

Ferris with her usual expressionless face, said:

“Uh. Let’s kill him.”

She said this kind of thing expressionlessly, meant that there was nothing more important than this.

Completely expressionless.

Her face had no expressions.

Her face had no feelings.

Anyone would say that right?

But...

Ryner looked at her expressionless face, smiling softly.

Because in the few months since he had come to know her, he already knew...

Her expressionless face wasn’t really expressionless.

Other people perhaps wouldn’t notice.

Other people saw her, perhaps they may say this—

Her beautiful face that was like a fairy’s, was like a soulless doll.

But, Ryner looked at that face and smiled softly.

Every day, every day—

Seeing her expression that was like a complex riddle, every second every moment changing...

Ryner smiled softly.

At this moment, Ferris seemed to be happy because of something.

Was it because of this clear blue sky?

Or because this was the land of Ferris’s family, the Eris family, that made her feel nostalgic?

Or, was it because of the conversation with Ryner...

But, anyway, she was happy.

Ryner discovered an expression that no one else knew of again...

“Ah, ah... Spending a few months, to gain this sort of trivial observation ability, it seems, my life is really worthless...”

When he said this, she had already stepped forward.

And then she turned back, still speaking with an expressionless face:

“Ryner, what is it? Let’s hurry! Let’s save the country.”

Her attitude was still cold.

But—

“.....But, perhaps it wasn’t that much of a waste of time...”

Ryner smiled wryly again, then followed her.

Their destination was the capital of the Roland Empire.

Their goal was to assassinate that extremely evil king, Sion Astal.



In that place.

Everyone seemed to live in a dream.

To find the meaning of why they existed.

To find the value in existing.

And, that country started to have a huge change.

In the beginning, it was this country that put in place a new king.

A new king...

He was not a normal king.

This king was a hero.

A Hero King that saved the country using his own power.

A young **Hero King**, Sion Astal.

He was in his early twenties and at the age of nineteen years old, but he already had all the special attributes of being a king.

Charisma, ability, looks.

And he built up a realistic among of achievements.

He let this country... This country that was governed by a tyrannical ruler, that only existed for the happiness of the nobles to change.

Although he was the son of the previous king's concubine, he built up a large achievement in the war with the Estabul Kingdom, reaching the top tier of the Roland Empire in one breath.

In the end he did away with the previous king, becoming the new king.

And then engulfing Estabul, and building up good ties with the neighbouring country the Imperial Nelpha. Other than that strengthening the ties with the allied country Runa Empire...

He got rid of the nobles who were involved in illegal affairs, correcting the past draconian laws.

His methods were righteous, fresh and immediate.

Everyone thought of that as such.

He, was a true hero.

He was an ideal king that everyone craned their necks and anticipated.

And...

“.....Yes, I am an ideal king.”

Sion said softly, in the situation that no one could hear him, smiling slightly.

Long silver hair, coupled with an appearance that could match up to it.

What was most important was, those pair of eyes filled with determination already held a kingly air.

He was the most noble, most respected existence in this country...

So he smiled.

He faced his subordinate in front of him with a confident smile—the youth who seemed to be around the same age as Sion, but wasn't known if he was truly twenty years old said: "And then?"

So that subordinate said with a dazed expression as if he were dreaming:

"The increase in water in the northern area..."

But he only said that, Sion immediately replied:

"Ah, that matter has already been handed to Calne to settle, you can seek him out for discussion. You can try to be more flexible with the budget. Ah, and, your report is easy to understand. But my handling of the matter was slightly slow, I'm sorry about that."

His subordinate heard that, revealing a frantic expression.

"How, how can it be? It is already fast. I cannot take the honor from Your Majesty's words. Then, then, I will..."

Saying that, his subordinate bowed his head to express his respect, Sion nodded.

His subordinate made to retreat...

But, in the midst he suddenly turned back, saying with an expression as if he were dreaming:

"Ah, that, that, please allow me to say a sentence."

He made that request.

But, Sion knew what he was going to say.

"I, I am truly lucky to be able to work for Your Majesty. For Your Majesty, I wouldn't regret having to die. I didn't think that Your Majesty would even be so clear, of the affairs of the border area where I am situated, and put so much effort into it..."

He had an expression as if he were dreaming, staring at Sion as he spoke.

Sion smiled and him gently.

“Thank you. I have a good subordinate too.”

His subordinate heard that, revealed an expression as if he wanted to cry and bowed his head, then left quickly.

Sion saw this, then laughed slightly again.

“...For an ideal king, you wouldn't regret if you died...”

Softly... A smile that was also self-mocking...

His subordinates looked at him, as if having a good dream.

An ideal king.

A perfect king.

They only had to trust this king, everything would be kept perfect, and the country would progress in a clear and steady direction.

Just not too long ago, there was a subordinate who had this sort dream towards him.

He said, for Sion, he could even sacrifice his life.

Fiole Folkal.

He saw that same dream on Sion's body.

When Sion was building up the country he saw that dream.

He saw that dream on the body of his younger sister who was living in this country.

In the end, he was dismembered by the nobles who hated Sion, and was murdered.

“.....”

Even so, he still pledged, for Sion, he would die with no regrets.

For the perfect country that the perfect king had built up.

For the country where no one would be harmed.

For the country where everyone could laugh freely.

“...And I actually put the lives of these people, who sacrificed their lives for this dream, on a balance and weighed it...”

Thinking of that, Sion couldn't help but feel that it was amusing.

“Haha...”

For the sake of building a country where no one would be hurt, he killed the nobles of this country.

Because there was a need to.

For the sake of building the country where everyone could laugh freely, he killed the Estabul soldiers who rebelled.

Because there was a need to.

And from today onwards he would continue killing.

Killing people.

Continuing to kill people.

But, he had already killed so many people, and this country didn't seem to have any signs of becoming better.

Which lives were important?

Which lives could he shrug off?

He weighed these lives on the scale, from today onwards he would continue causing deaths.

No... Just because Sion was seating on the valuable position of the king, that was why there was a larger number of people as compared to the past dying.

But everyone thought that this king was perfect.

“Hahaha...”

They really thought that this king would establish a country where no one would be hurt, and could happily pass their days.

A killer king building a country that saved people.

It was as if...

“As if it were a farce...”

Sion muttered.

Even if he killed the nobles, the real culprit behind the scenes didn't appear.

Just by the looks of the present situation, one day it would be unavoidable that Imperial Nelpha, which they had already built up a good relationship with, would be alit with the fires of war?

But not only that, they didn't know what changes would occur with the Runa Empire which was their allied country.

No, the whole Menoris Continent seemed to be entering a warring period.

The northern country Stohl, was destroyed by a start-up country called Gastark.

Normally this was impossible...

A small country like Gastark, actually was completely changed, eliminating a large country.

Was it because a relatively, relatively talented king appeared...?

Anyway, Gastark's momentum couldn't be stopped.

Following that—

Following that, they would continue to expand their territory...

Every country would have a sense of crisis, and start to increase their military arrangements.

Fear created a chain reaction.

Fear spread on a wide-scale basis, and if this continued, perhaps in the not-too-distant future, it would become a war that would engulf the whole world?

So, Sion travelled to many places to protest against the progress of the formation of this situation.

Was there any method, that could reduce the number of casualties?

Was there any method, that could reduce the number of the conflicts?

And the world moved in a direction that was different from what he wished.

The more he rushed, trying his best to avoid conflict, the more fearful the other countries were towards Roland.

People suspected—Roland which had completely engulfed Estabul, jumping to the status of a large country in one breath, would they continue to attack other countries following that?

Did they need to have more power to counter Roland?

At least in the southern part of the continent, the fires of war were not in Gastark...

It was in Roland.

It was already unstoppable...

But at this point, Sion shook his head.

“How hilarious, there is still a way...”

He said, sitting on the cold throne, softly sucking in a breath, his eyes sharpening.

“Yes. There is still a way.”

He softly said to himself.

To reach this goal, no matter what he had to re-establish the Estabul army that although they had already engulfed, but at the present were unable to reorganize.

There was not much time left.

Roland had to hasten their government affairs at a speed that was faster than the other countries, in order to strengthen their abilities.

Claugh should be carrying out the work of organizing the Estabul military quarters now.

The remaining problem was the nobles of Estabul...

To make the nobles listen to him, was there a need for Sion to appear personally?

But, if this matter could be carried out smoothly, then on the realistic side, Roland should be able to gain twice of what they had... No, perhaps through the cooperation of the magic research between the two countries, they would be able to have a significant progress in the research, gaining three times of the power that they had in the past.

In this way, to the neighbouring Runa or Nelpha... Even to the outside Cassla this would be a form of pressure.

And if they could create a situation where each country could help each other, before the fires of war burnt their way here, perhaps...

Just as Sion thought that, he discovered that a shadow had appeared in the doorway to the hall.

He raised his head, and saw a man with black but beautiful long hair.

A tall, slim and elegantly-dressed figure.

On his slim fingers he wore a rarely-seen black ring.

But, the most attractive feature was that pair of eyes.

Deep blue cold eyes as if they were frozen.

Those eyes that seemed to look at everything arrogantly, and were so frigid that they could almost hurt people looked at Sion.

"I have returned, Your Majesty."

A mild voice that was still cold.

Sion heard that.

"Is it Froaude... I have waited for you for a long time."

He said softly.

Lieutenant Miran Froaude.

This man who could still shine with a different light even amongst Sion's numerous henchmen.

He proclaimed that he not only wanted to enable Sion to sit on the throne of the Roland Empire, but even more he wanted to make him a king of the Great

Roland Empire whose influence was spread over the entire Menoris Continent.

Sion repeatedly enlisted him because of this.

He was willing to bear the dark, dirty work that blocked the way of his path to hegemony.

And Froaude completed his job just as he said.

He put in place a trap for the nobles of Estabul to fall into, making them rebel and then killing them...

And then eliminating the nobles in Roland who were against Sion.

His own father Marquis Froaude was included amongst them.

He desired the methods with the highest efficiency.

The methods with the best results.

In order to reach this objective, no matter how dirty the matter, he could even not frown.

This was the modus operandi of this man called Froaude.

Of course, the close henchmen of Sion in the past were not supportive of his methods.

No, in anyone's eyes... Even if it were the citizens, they would certainly be disgusted with it that their faces would be twisted?

But, Sion accepted his plan.

Because he knew, Froaude's plan was the most effective way.

Weighing the lives on the scales...

Sion accepted those plans with wondrously good efficiency.

As he gave himself an excuse—this should be the best plan.

I am not wrong...

As he told himself, this is the plan with the least sacrifices.

But—

But, who am I giving that excuse to?

Who am I giving this excuse, that why I had to do this...

At this moment—

Froaude approached him slowly, for some reason he actually had a concerned expression.

“...Your Majesty doesn’t appear to be very well. In the period when I wasn’t around, did you overwork yourself? Your Majesty.”

It was rare that he would say this.

Sion heard that, revealing a smile.

“Would you chase after a useless king?”

“It is because I know that you are capable, that I would hand my life to Your Majesty. But, Your Majesty seems to be too capable... Your Majesty’s body is unable to match up with your ability.”

“Urgh, that doesn’t sound like a compliment.”

Froaude heard that, revealing a faint smile.

“Because I’m not complimenting you. Managing your health is also one of a king’s duties. And, having heirs.”

Sion shrugged.

“There’s no time now that I can think about the problem about marriage.”

But Froaude’s reply was very simple.

“You don’t have to marry in order to have children.”

“Enough, don’t raise that...”

But, Froaude interrupted Sion’s words.

“There should be many girls who have feelings for Your Majesty? Because Your Majesty is the Hero King. Female nobles...”

“I said...”

“If that’s so, then let me do the selection...”

“Froaude!!”

Sion shouted at that point.

So Froaude used his cold eyes to stare at Sion's face...

"Ah... You seem to look better... I can be at ease now."

He actually said that.

Sion heard that, and sighed with a surprised expression.

"You mocked me just for that?"

Froaude replied with a mild tone:

"I am only learning from the methods of Field Marshal Claugh Klom-sama."

"He's not around, you don't have to learn from him."

Sion frowned, but Froaude still had a stern expression.

"But, it is a huge issue that Field Marshal Claugh Klom-sama isn't by Your Majesty's side."

"Eh? What do you mean?"

"Your Majesty needs a person who has more oversight. Because sometimes Your Majesty will think too much."

"..."

In that moment, Sion's expression changed.

Think too much... There were too many areas that he could waste his time arguing against that...

Froaude said as if he were hunting down a response:

"So, I have done some investigating... To reduce the mental lethargy...the best way is to go out with friends, or be in a relationship with a woman. There are at least four women..."

"I said that's enough of that topic!"

Sion shouted again, speaking:

"Really. You couldn't be arriving so late because of those investigating those boring issues?"

Saying that, he stared at Froaude.

Yes.

In these few months, Froaude had been sent to Runa Empire on Sion's order.

His mission was to verify the alliance with Runa Empire.

This was the important work for Roland not to be involved in the war in the upcoming days, and accumulate their power without rushing.

In contrast, if Roland could avoid war with the other countries, continuing to accumulate their power, then one day they could unite their power with Runa and Nelpha, going against other stronger countries...

But.

At this moment Froaude said:

"Runa has already sided with Gastark..."

In a split second.

"Nonsense!"

Sion couldn't help but shout.

"It can't be... Is this the truth?"

If this was the truth, then matters were worsening.

Of course, previously Runa had an unstable aura.

But if it were true that Runa and Gastark had joined arms, and if Froaude who had went forward with the status of an ambassador had brought back the truth of this matter, then that meant that the unsteadiness of the issue had reached an abnormal stage.

But, judging by the present situation, that was something that was impossible.

Even if they had conquered the northern large country Stohl... Gastark, no, even Stohl was a country in the extreme north.

Betraying the large country that was the nearest to Runa, joining arms with Gastark...

With the present situation, what benefit would there be to Runa in doing this?

Froaude continued:

“Of course, there isn’t any official news of joining up with Gastark.”

“That’s obvious.”

Sion said when he heard that.

Yes.

It couldn’t be announced.

Even if presently there were people who were against the king, rumours of joining up with Gastark were rampant under the table...

Runa itself couldn’t stand to be obviously enemies with Roland, and join arms with Gastark.

But...

Sion frowned.

The situation didn’t appear to be good.

Froaude went to Runa only to confirm the alliance between the two countries.

If he discovered that the other side had some unstable signs...

Then let them have a look at Roland’s current military power, and pressurize them a little.

And what he meant by unstable signs, should be the matter of the nobles of Roland and Runa combining forces, attempting to assassinate Sion.

But, Froaude spent two months on this mission, and he was late in returning.

On the reports that he sent back at fixed intervals, he only wrote about the specific situation of his investigation in Runa...

Sion regained his calm slightly, asking:

“Then, what did the king of Runa say? Did he say, that he wanted to maintain friendly ties with us, even if it were only on the surface?”

But, Froaude shook his head.

“I did not see the king of Runa. According to the princess, the king has left the country...”

“Left the country... Of course he couldn’t be going to Roland? Nelpha, or Cassla?”

“No...”

“Then where is he?”

Froaude replied simply:

“Runa. According to my investigation, the king of Runa is hiding in some castle in Runa. He was threatened by the ambassadors from Gastark...”

Then he said with an uncomprehending expression:

“But, what is going on? The Gastark ambassadors who are from a far place, can threaten Runa without moving a single soldier... Is this possible?”

Froaude had an uncomprehending expression.

But, Sion was speechless.

The ambassadors from Gastark...

They had come to visit Sion once.

At that time the assassin was easily defeated by Lucile who protected Sion on a long term basis...

But, that power was beyond normal means.

Several beasts made from lightning appeared in the grand hall, attempting to kill Sion.

Just by the level of the current magic research, this kind of things couldn’t possibly exist.

That meant...

That thing was the **Heroes’ Relic**.

The power that could largely enhance the current magic structure.

The thing that he ordered Ryner and the others to find.

But, if possible, Sion didn't want to use those objects. Judging from the report that Ryner and the others sent back, it was clear, the Relics held too strong of a power.

It was large enough that it could be called... the devil's power.

To humans, the power was too huge.

If it was used, then there would be serious casualties.

And human lives would be as worthless as trash, in a moment many people would die.

Just like that time.

When Ryner's **Alpha Stigma** lost control, and decimated the Estabul Mage Knight Battalion.

At that time they did depend on some sacrifices, to allow Roland to be able to engulf Estabul.

But... That sort of matter couldn't happen again.

But, there were already some countries starting to use that kind of power.

No... That was obviously a truth that he already knew.

According to the report that Ryner and the others sent back, they seemed to have fought with the people using that power several times.

But these matters weren't completely clear.

He should say, their reports lacked accuracy...

To be more exact, that meant it lacked seriousness...

On Froaude's report, he mentioned that he fought with some characters that could be Ryner and Ferris, but Ryner and the others completely didn't mention this...

To be more concise, the reports that came back once in a while were through Ferris's younger sister Iris, and presented in the form of an illustration book...

But, Sion knew they had come across people who used the relics in Runa.

And the people who used the Relics voluntarily claimed the title of being from Gastark...

So Sion knew that these things had occurred.

But, he still didn't want to use that power.

If he used that power to start up a war...

This world would probably be completely destroyed.

Because he knew of that possibility.

The world would definitely not progress according to the content in Ryner's report.

Using that power, couldn't create peace.

In contrast it would probably cause the destruction of the world?

As long as they had witnessed that power, they would probably understand, that was not the power that a human could wield.

So Sion didn't mention the matter of the Relics to Froaude...

Or perhaps he should say, he almost didn't mention this matter to any of his trusted companions.

Of course, if other countries had the Relics, then Roland had to have them too, as a method to guard against the others.

So, he ordered Ryner to collect them.

But...

Sion narrowed his eyes and asked:

"A threat that would be strong enough to make the Runa king yield? How many people died? The soldiers guarding the king..."

Froaude heard that, staring at Sion.

Using his dark frigid eyes, staring fixedly at Sion...

"The soldiers guarding the city seem to be..."

He said that much, but Sion already understood.

They were killed.

By the ambassadors from Gastark...

Froaude continued:

“What happens next is the problem. According to the report, it is said that Gastark used a strange thing that seems to be like magic on the Stohl army...”

“A strange thing that seems to be like magic?”

“Yes. That magic... It sounds a little unbelievable, but... it seems that Gastark used a large-scale magic that with one shot, eliminated Stohl, and wiped out tens of thousands of soldiers...”

“...”

Sion wasn't able to say anything.

Tens of thousands?!

Just by using one magic structure there were thousands of...

Things had progressed to this stage.

Froaude stared at Sion, then he continued:

“If that is the truth, then, the matter of the ambassadors from Gastark making Runa yield, is clearly not a groundless matter.”

“...”

“Things are a little bad. We have to try to find a method to guard against that strange magic as soon as possible.”

Sion heard that, softly saying:

“...I understand.”

But, Froaude didn't stop there.

He still used that cold, gloomy eyes to stare at Sion.

“Judging by this situation, not only Runa, we have to pay more attention to Nelpha's movements than we did in the past. Before the countries that were threatened by Gastark starts the invasion, and cause Roland to receive a disastrous blow... we have to make act first...”

“I said I understand!”

Sion couldn't help but yell.

Froaude saw that, bowing his head.

“...But, Your Majesty should rest now. We still have time. If we are able to discover the seriousness of matters before we were destroyed... then we more or less have the space to act. Then, I will go to arrange the results from investigating Runa into a report...”

Saying that, he turned around.

Sion stared at Froaude's figure...

He felt that darkness lay before him.

The mad world, the mad country.

That was a world that he was very familiar with.

Like before he became the king, the situation of this country.

The mad world, the mad country.

And the people were starting to become mad...

Gaining a mad power, the people started to become mad following that.

Yes.

There was space to act.

But...

Sion moaned in a voice that was so soft that it couldn't be heard.



“ ... ”

Initially...

He had thought in this way.

Initially a large portion of this world was mad from the beginning.

At least the scenes that he saw were mad.

His parents who gave birth to him.

His foster father who brought him up.

This country called Roland.

And, these organisms called humans who lost their mind because of desire...

“Of course that includes me...”

Froaude said softly.

He turned and slowly left the grand hall, a faint smile appearing on his face, these thoughts spinning in his mind.

But, this was not something strange.

Because humans had been created in this way.

Engulfing others to survive.

But, this was not enough.

People continued to devour others, in order to consume better things.

But, this was not enough.

To have better clothes...

It was not enough.

To have better living conditions...

It was not enough.

They wanted more, wanted more, wanted more, wanted more.

More, more, more, more.

As if desiring things were a mission, madly demanding them.

But, Froaude thought that this was not too bad.

Just by living, naturally this type of desire would be born.

Wanting to have a better life...

Wanting to have a better country...

Wanting to have a better king...

And Froaude found the best king.

This king was more elegant than anyone else.

He was more caring than anyone else, more fragile than anyone else.

A king who was clever, and understood the pain of others.

This was great.

It was really great.

He was the king that Froaude desired.

Just by imagining the country that was governed by him, Froaude felt a sense of numbness going through his whole body.

Just by imagining the world that he governed, his whole body would shudder.

It was a great world?

The country he governed would definitely not have

It would be a perfect and peaceful country filled with sympathy where no one would cry and shout.

Would it be that type of country?

That type of country...

It was a mad world filled with hypocrisy and deception.

And...

And to him...

To him...

“ ...”

Froaude narrowed his dark blue eyes.

Sharply narrowing, narrowing, narrowing...

But strangely showing a slightly absent-minded expression...

“But, to a person who wants to reach that goal, His Majesty... is too considerate...”

Froaude turned his eyes to the problem before him again.

The problem that lay before him was the Runa Empire.

And before the Runa Empire there was the Gastark Empire.

From the king's response earlier, he could confirm that.

The king knew that Gastark had the Relics.

Perhaps it was the **Alpha Stigma** bearer who wrote the report on the **Heroes' Relics!**

The information that Ryner Lute sent back?

But, His Majesty didn't tell Froaude about the Relics.

Not only that, he didn't even mention it to his trusted subordinates...

“.....He is really too caring.....”

Of course, it was also because of his special trait of being considerate, that made Froaude willing to follow him.

But if this continued, he would probably be unable to become the dictator of the Menoris Continent?

Presently, Gastark had already started to use the Relics, and started a war.

Things were not going to progress according to people's wishes.

The two Gastark spies that he had previously fought with in Runa, Sui and Kuu, were completely familiar with the way on how to use the **Heroes' Relics**.

When he saw that, Froaude was slightly surprised.

Froaude turned his gaze to the strange black ring on his hand.

Then...

“I didn’t think that apart from this, there would be other items... Heroes’ Relics... Or in the words of the Gastark people ‘**Rhule Fragmei**’? And the Gastark king used this frightening power, to kill tens of thousands of enemies...”

Froaude couldn’t help but smile.

A dark, cold smile, as if it were the devil.

“Using such a large power with immense influence... What does the Gastark king take this world for? What kind of dream is he having? Using that large power to control this continent... Then, building a peaceful world where there is no war?”

He muttered, then laughed.

“...Heh, heh heh heh... How interesting. So I said this world is too interesting. It can only be described as mad...”

Killing tens of thousands of people in one go, then speaking of peace.

It sounded really touching.

Gastark in the north and Roland in the south...

Which side would be the surviving one?

Or, would both sides crash and burn?

But, that would be the time when the whole Menoris Continent disappeared?

But, it definitely could not turn out this way.

He definitely could not allow matters to result in that.

Gastark made a serious mistake.

They made their move on Roland too early.

Allowing Froaude to notice ‘**that**’.

Even so, there was value in going ahead with it.

No matter whether if it was to Runa, or to Gastark.

And the king should have noticed it too.

No, he should have always known it.

When he knew that Gastark had the Relics... Or to be more accurate, when he knew that Ryner Lute and Froaude had fought against each other?

No, perhaps even before that...

With his mind, when he saw Ryner Lute's report, he should have known that there was this possibility.

And at that time he did not pay attention to it.

Because he was too kind.

Because he knew... Using that kind of demon-like power, what would the whole world become.

So, he ignored it.

Where had that kindness come from?

What was the cause of his fragility?

What was it that made his gaze clouded?

Where was his heart pointed towards?

Froaude thought.

So...

"Firstly..."

Eliminate Ryner Lute.

But—

"No."

He shook his head lightly.

According to the report, Ryner Lute seemed to have returned to Roland.

If that was so, eliminating him should be a piece of cake?

But, doing that was meaningless.

If his death caused him to become what the king's heart depended on, then that would be another headache.

He had to make him leave His Majesty's side, through a natural manner.

Then, what should he do?

This matter was not too difficult.

Froaude had fought with Ryner Lute once, he had reported this matter to Sion too.

But, Ryner Lute did not make a report.

Not mentioning the matter about Froaude's black ring, to Sion...

This person was too dangerous.

He was too uncertain, and could too easily affect the whole situation.

Even so...

At this point Froaude closed his eyes.

"It seems that I can only act on the lynch-pin that connects this relationship..."

Remove the lynch-pin that made Ryner Lute unable to leave Sion...

Milk Callaud.

Or Luke Stokkart, Rahel Miller...

There were many things that he could do, where should he start from?

"Un... where should I start...destroying?"

Froaude muttered in delight.

Chapter 2: Yes, I definitely found him

What should he do?

Sion was troubled over this.

If this continued it would be bad.

He knew, he couldn't go along with the flow like this.

Even if the whole world was mad, but if Roland messed up its steps too, its ending would be destruction.

If they used force against force, the ending was only destruction.

Power...

Progressing only by depending on power...

This way...

Attacking Runa, gaining power, but it was still not enough.

Attacking Nelpha, gaining power, but it was still not enough.

Using the power of the relics to head to Cassla, and continuing to progress, destroying everything before them...

And in the end clashing with Gastark.

And after Gastark...

What was there?

There was nothing.

Even if it were to gain victory, they would definitely find nothing.

Leaving only his father... mountains of corpses caused by when he was the previous king of this country.

And Sion was lying on top of these bodies...

But, was there really no other route to choose?

Even if he used the relics, wasn't there a better method...

As Sion walked from the throne room to his office, he was along that large and cold black corridor, thinking furiously.

"What...what other methods is there..."

But he thought and thought, he thought and thought, but he couldn't see another way.

Like this corridor...

The huge corridor without an end in sight.

No matter how many things were gained, he still couldn't see what was ahead.

The king of Gastark already had a large power, and was starting to use it in war... But, just only this wouldn't make him feel satisfied.

Once they had a large power, they would want to use this power.

He was very clear on this, men were these kind of creatures.

Having a large power, how was it to be used? All developments were closely linked with this...

But...

Sion stopped thinking.

".....How should that power be used? But, if the king of Gastark is planning to use that power to save the world, then what would it become? If he had such a large power, then planned to use that power to create a peaceful world without conflict? Am I going to go against that power? Then..."

Then, everything really could not be saved anymore.

That was the real joke.

It was so hilarious that it made Sion unable to resist having a stiff smile.

Having the same thoughts and feelings, but killed each other?

And gambling on several tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of lives.

“Something this funny...”

Something this funny...

It was seen easily on this world.

It was already helpless...

Bang—immediately there was a sound of hitting something.

Sion banged the wall forcefully...

“Is it really helpless?”

Blood seeped out from his fist.

But, he didn’t feel the pain, he could only feel anger.

Anger towards himself, and towards the world.

The world was mad.

He wasn’t so naïve that he didn’t know this, because he had always seen this along the way.

Seeing people treat his mother like she were no better than a dog; seeing the people desperately wanting to live, but, meeting the terrible end of being stepped on like rubbish.

And his companions...

Seeing the appearances of Ryner, Kiefer, Tyle, Toni and Fahl struggling in pain.

No matter whether it was the murderers, or the victims, they were almost going mad from struggling in pain...

So, he had sat on the position of the king.

To change everything.

To change this crazy world.

As of today, he had become the king after much difficulty...

But they now told him, it was already hopeless?

“.....Don’t joke with me.....”

He muttered as if groaning.

It was hilarious.

If that was the case, then there wasn't a need for a king.

If he were to stop here now, there wasn't any need for a king.

If that really was so, then let Froaude be king.

There was no change needed to be made.

No, just choose a useless noble who could be seen anywhere, and whose rational was clouded by lust to be king.

But...

The king was Sion Astal.

If that was so...

"If that is so, then change!"

He shouted, hitting the wall again.

There must be a path that could be taken.

Things couldn't turn out as what Froaude said.

To reach this goal, he would still need a minimum amount of power after all? Enough power to be able to go against Gastark...

But, people who could use power were unsure about the ways of using power.

How to use such a large power, affected the whole situation.

He didn't want to do something in the name of righteousness.

But, he wanted to find a path that could reduce the number of hurt lives as much as possible.

Even Gastark was stopped the invasion in order to conquer the southern continent at an astounding speed.

There should be a path that could be taken.

To reach this goal, completely securing Estabul was the first step.

In the recent days, he had to go to Estabul's territory, to deal with the

nobles...

This move had its own risks.

In Roland, even if it were Gastark assassins who were using relics, they were unable to harm Sion.

Because Lucile was there.

As long as he was in Roland, no matter what kind of monster, it was hard for it to even think of approaching Sion?

But... once he left Roland, and entered Estabul's lands... he would lose Lucile's protection.

Would Gastark let go of this good chance?

But if he wanted to completely take hold of Estabul, Sion still needed to head to that country's land...

This was a kind of bet.

But, it wasn't without its own winning chances.

Clagh was there too now. As long as he was there, he shouldn't be in danger because of a few small matters...

Uh, in that case, he had to start thinking of who he should leave in Roland to be responsible for the work now...

As he thoughts moved forward again, he momentarily felt as if everything could progress smoothly.

Sion settled a few problems in his mind, as he thought of the plan to go to Estabul, he walked to his office.

There was a small door in the middle of the corridor.

It was a simple, undecorated door.

This was the door to his office that he spent nearly all his time in.

People who didn't understand Sion's true character, would probably be very surprised if they saw this simple room... In contrast, he was not accustomed to

extravagant, gaudy rooms.

Was this a retaliation against his father who used to bully the people and live in great comfort...

Or was it the influence of his mother who had a respectful pure soul more than anyone else, but had been played around by father and stepped upon for her whole life?

Anyway, the room was large enough for him to work in, and sleep in.

When he had implied, to choose this room for his main activities, even Fiole said:

“If Your Majesty wants to rest in this sort of place, then wouldn’t I only be able to sleep at the side of the road?”

Sion reached out to touch the door handle and smiled when he heard that.

At that time he was still dreaming, Fiole had dreams for him, and trusting him unwaveringly could allow him to respond to all his dreams...

“...I have probably... become weak too...”

Since young he had always thought that he could do anything.

Even if it was something that seemed impossible, even if it seemed like it couldn’t be impossible.

Why did everyone say that was impossible?

Wasn’t that very easy?

They just needed to move forward.

He had thought.

Wasn’t it an easy matter to let everyone live in a world where they could laugh happily and live...

But now— “...”

He had a slight sad smile on his face.

Was it helplessness towards himself?

Or was it despair towards being unable to progress as expected in the world?

But, he was already unable to stop.

He touched the door handle. Then, he made to open the door...

“Eh...”

But, at that moment Sion stopped.

It felt a little difficult to open the door. Not only that, there was a human presence inside.

An assassin?

Sion narrowed his eyes.

But, where was the assassin from?

How many were there?

He concentrated, attempting to feel the presences in the room.

But he shook his head, an assassin that was able to infiltrate the city of Roland, could not be unable to erase their presence.

At the moment he could only feel the presence of one person... But, that was probably a trap?

Unless the other party's plan to was make him mistake there was only one, and be off guard...

Or, the other party took him as an idiot, thinking that a relaxed king of one country, would be unable to find their presence?

No, it couldn't be like that?

This presence was deliberately displayed to make him find it.

But, then what was the answer?

Should he walk in directly? Or go to find reinforcements?

“.....Uh.”

If he found that this presence itself was a trap, then the other party's intention was to make him call for help, and not enter the room...

But, at this moment Sion had a slight smile.

“Lucile... are you there?”

He asked softly.

“...”

There was no reply.

But, he was there.

He was that kind of person.

Unless it was necessary, or else he definitely would not appear... But, he was there.

“I thought so.”

Sion smiled bitterly.

...No, perhaps he really wasn't there.

Only, if Lucile really wasn't by Sion's side right now, then that probably meant he didn't think that the person in the office could threaten Sion too much?

This was Roland—Lucile had assigned Sion as king, as long as he did not feel that Sion was not suited for the position, then in this country, Sion would not fall into danger.

This was that sort of place.

Sion asked again.

“You want me to face this myself?”

“...”

There was still no reply...

Sion said when he saw this:

“Don't overestimate me. Compared to you, I'm very weak?”

Although he said that, but Sion seemed a little happy, injecting strength in his body.

A real battle... How many years had he last had it?

Although he hadn't stopped training his body, but... that was something that

was when he was sixteen years old.

At that time he was with Ryner and Kiefer and the others, living in the Special Royal Military Academy...

“I don’t know how dull I’ve gotten.”

The presence still remained.

The other side should have discovered the current situation—

He should have found that Sion was standing in front of the room, but not entering.

The other side had already prepared a few traps, and was sitting in there and waiting for him?

Sion was even more excited.

“Very well, let me test out my strength!” Then, he lightly breathed in...

“Phew!”

He breathed out forcefully, at the same time he opened the door and walked in.

In a moment, the presence came from above.

Sion raised his head. Immediately, a book fell towards him from above...

The book was placed above the door ledge. Like in the school in the past, the pranks that they evil brats played on the teachers, pranks that pulled on people’s legs...

Sion saw this.

“Tch!”

He frowned, his expression tightening.

The fact that his attention had been turned to this matter, he himself had completely fallen into the other person’s trap.

If this were a real trap, what fell should be a knife spiked with poison?

But, the other side was clear, he wouldn’t fall for that kind of trap.

The other person's intention was to pull Sion's attention to that direction.

And to reach this goal, a book was sufficient.

And that book was a book placed in Sion's room...

"...It seems it's for real?"

He settled into a defensive position.

The next attack would follow closely? As long as he could receive the next blow, he could think of a way to retaliate...

Sion tensed his body, his left hand protecting his head, his right hand clutching his chest, preparing to fight.

As long as his fatal points weren't hit, the situation could be improved.

But.....

"....."

The blow did not appear.

He looked around.

There wasn't even an enemy in sight.

He only saw the mountains of documents, and chairs, tables, shelves, and a half-open door that led to the adjacent resting room.

And the presence was coming from behind the door...

"....."

Sion stared in that direction without speaking.

As a side note, the ledge above the door to the resting room had a book too, and it was a thick dictionary...

"....."

Sion was still silent.

He slowly stepped forward, walking to the adjacent resting room.

Following that he took down the dictionary from the door, and continued to walk on.

The resting room was a narrow room with a single bed in it.

As long as he stood in the doorway, he could see the entire room. There was no place to hide. No, if they wanted to hide under the bed, perhaps they could still barely hide there...

There couldn't be anyone who would hide in such a laughable place?

That meant, the person giving off that presence was of course...

“.....”

But, Sion was still silent.

The scene before his eyes was too hilarious.

There was indeed an assassin—in the resting room.

But, that assassin...

That assassin wasn't hidden under the bed.

He was even on the bed.

If that was so, at least he should have hidden under the covers?

But he didn't know how he did it, the blanket had actually flown off the bed, into the corner of the room.

And that assassin...

Had black hair that was so messy that it could not be messed up any further because of his bad sleeping habit, added on to completely shut, making people suspect that those eyes would never open. Saliva drooled out from that open mouth, wetting Sion's pillow...

The assassin's appearance was very annoying...

“.....Huh.....”

Sion sighed with a surprised expression.

Following that, he saw that he had a dictionary in his hand.

Sion saw that.

“Oh?”

He had a mischievous expression, then he lightly threw the dictionary from his head, allowing that dictionary to follow a beautiful parabolic motion.

“Oh~~”

That dictionary directly landed on the assassin’s head....

“Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhh?!”

“Hey, Ryner! What are you shouting about! Get up quickly, or else you’ll be late for lessons!”

Sion shouted, Ryner said with a surprised expression:

“Eh? Eh? Sc-school? Eh? Are we having lessons today? Eh...”

He looked around in confusion with half-opened sleepy eyes...

Considering...

Considering...

At last, he finally saw Sion with a stunned expression.

“.....Ah, Sion, morning.”

“Morning.”

“...This is that place, right? It’s Sion’s room, right?”

“Eh.”

“..... Eh? That, I already don’t need to go to school.....Ah, I remember. That’s right, that’s right.....”

“Ah, you’re finally awake? Then, the things...”

“.....Ah, but, it doesn’t matter now. That’s that.”

Saying that, he closed his eyes again, entering dream land.

Sion saw that, hummed, nodding, leaving the resting room.

Then he took down a book that was at least ten times the size of that dictionary from the shelves, it was a ridiculously large book. It was the largest book in Sion’s room...

The heaviness of that book made Sion tremble unconsciously.

“I, I didn’t think it would be this heavy? If I’m not careful, I might become a murderer here... but, I can’t stop, I can’t stop here.”

As he said, he used trembling hands to lift that large book up...

Ryner opened an eye slightly. Looking at Sion with lethargic eyes...

Following that Ryner’s eyes widened, and trembled because of extreme shock.

“You, are you an idiot?! Thr-throwing such a heavy thing here... Don’t throooooooooooooooooowww!!”

As he shouted, he desperately leapt clear of the bed.

His movements were incomparably quick, Sion whose movements had dulled much... No, perhaps even in the past Royal Military Special Academy, Sion who had had been called a genius was unable to be the opponent of him?

It was a completely difference in levels.

If he were the enemy, it would be a challenging opponent...

“You, do you want to kill me?!”

Ryner shouted, Sion smiled when he saw this:

“Ah, morning.”

“Whaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaat morning! I was nearly killed by you!!”

Ryner yelled.

Sion shrugged upon seeing this:

“But, didn’t you want to kill me? Ne, didn’t you put that book above the door!”

Ryner heard this, picking up the normal sized dictionary by the bed, saying with a slightly depressed expression: “.....Next time, I’m going to dig an empty hole in the dictionary, and place a snake... or a frog or something like that in it...”

For some reason, his thoughts seemed to be focused on the trap above the door.

Uh, let's not talk about this for now.

Sion surveyed the room, then asked:

"When did you come back?"

Ryner was as if a different person from just now, but Sion sat back on the bed with an extremely familiar lazy movement.

"Today morning."

"Then?"

"Eh? Then? Then I felt very tired, so I slept. The end."

Saying that, Ryner made to lie down again, Sion had a surprised expression at this.

"I say... You spent a few months going to find Heroes' Relics. You returned after much difficulty, and you only tell me, 'I felt very tired, so I slept', something like that? Don't tell me you don't have any report? After all if there is any information about the other countries or relics, and the details of the Gastark killers you dealt with... Uh, talking about which, you should have been in Iyet Republic before, why did you appear there, don't these need reports?"

"Yeah, that makes sense."

Ryner nodded simply after he heard that, crossing his arms as if thinking.

After thinking for a few seconds, perhaps he finally had a cohesive answer? He hit his hands together.

"Oh yes, I discovered an amazing truth recently."

"A truth?"

"Yeah. Talking about which one day, I was met some difficulties at sea, and had fainted... when I woke up, I was already on a very comfortable beach."

"Oh. A beach?"

"Yes, a beach. I heard, that is the beach belonging to the Eris family..."

"Eh? Ferris's family?"

"Yes. Ferris's family's. That beach was very comfortable... I had an afternoon

nap there. If I had to describe how comfortable it was, let me tell you, the sky was so blue, and so high. I could hear only the sound of the waves and the cries of the sea birds...”

Ryner’s expression when he described it was so comfortable, it made Sion try to imagine that sort of scene...

“Yeah... It sounds pretty comfortable.”

The scene really seemed to be comfortable in his imagination.

The image of him and Ryner lying on the beach, and taking the chance when Ryner was sleeping soundly, to place a hermit crab on his face appeared in his mind...

“It seems very fun.”

But, Ryner of course did not know that a hermit crab had been placed on his face.

“I said so?”

Ryner said:

“Lying on such a comfortable beach, wouldn’t it let people want to have afternoon naps?”

“Eh.”

“In the end, many thoughts appeared in my mind. Like, can my life continue like that? Why did I end up like that? The sea was so big, but why did I have to be so busy every day...”

“Ah, I understand I understand.”

Sion involuntarily nodded hard in agreement.

Ryner continued:

“I thought, why do I have to be so busy? Who is the culprit? Then like this, I slept and thought, then slept and thought.”

“Uh-huh.”

Sion nodded again.

“So, I finally realized! It’s that person! It’s that person’s fault! Everything is the fault of that tyrannical Roland king, Sion Astal!”

“I see.”

He nodded even harder, as if there wasn’t something that made more sense than this.

Then Sion stared at Ryner.

“Then, you want to kill me?”

“Yup.”

“Using a dictionary?”

“Using a dictionary.”

“This is the truth you spent a few months to discover?”

“Don’t you think it’s amazing?”

Ryner said with confidence.

Sion pressed his forehead when he saw this.

After a while...

“.....Yeah, it’s amazing, it’s really amazing...”

He couldn’t help but laugh.

The expression he had at this moment would definitely not be shown to his subordinates.

It wouldn’t be seen by the nobles.

It wouldn’t even be seen by the civilians...

And, even Fiole had never seen it...

It was the smile of a youth who didn’t think that anything in this world was impossible, or couldn’t be done...

But, that smile immediately disappeared.

Sion looked at Ryner with sharp eyes as if he could see through him.

“But, Ryner, you’re too impatient. After all I am a king of a country? And I am

the Hero King that is praised everywhere... Attempting to kill someone like me is a serious crime..."

"Ah, you said it, you finally said it! You just said you were the Hero King? How embarrassing. I always suspected, where is your confidence from?"

But Sion raised his chest with a serious expression.

"It's that~~ Because I am someone who is born to be king."

"Ah, let me ask you, don't you feel embarrassed saying that?"

"It's the truth, it can't be helped? The glow I give off is different from normal. How should I describe it? It's that pure, sacred glow from a pure soul..."

"Noo~~oooo! I don't want to hear anymore. Even if you don't feel embarrassed, it's awkward for the listener. Anyway, I have to kill you. Finally, I will bring peace to this country."

But, Sion did not give up. He beamed and said:

"Ah, I want to say more. I want to say more things in your ear, so that you will want to escape because of embarrassment."

Saying that, Sion attacked Ryner who was lying on the bed...

"Ah! You, don't... Save, save me~~ Someone wants to rape me~~"

As Ryner said, he unhesitatingly caught Sion's attacking hands, then pushed back, attempting to push Sion to the bed.

"Oh? I won't admit defeat. Look at my counter wrestling... Ah?!"

But, he didn't know how it was done, Sion's body flew in the air, his whole body landing directly in the middle of the mattress.

In a moment, the ceiling appeared within his sight.....

"....."

After he stared at that empty, white ceiling in surprise...Sion turned to his side.

"Eh, are you going to take advantage of me now? As expected of the pervert in the legends."

He said that...

Ryner stared at Sion's face with half-lidded sleepy eyes. Following that he sighed, then sat on the bed again.

Then—

“Sion.”

“Eh?”

“...You must be very tired...”

“Is that so?”

“Yeah. Very tired.”

Sion stared at the ceiling again when he heard this.

The white, empty ceiling.

The softness of the mattress was very comfortable, it nearly made him lose consciousness in an instant.

Oh yes, how long had it been since he had lain on this bed?

He tried to recall, but he couldn't remember.

Thinking about it, he had mostly dozed off at his office table, he rarely used the bed.

But, the reason why he was tired wasn't because of this?

He frequently worked without sleeping for several days.

The real reason was...

Sion said softly:

“.....Yeah, perhaps.....perhaps I'm really exhausted. But, it's not a problem.”

“Eh? Why?”

“Because I'm lying on the bed now.”

“Ah? You can resurrect because of this? If it were me, I would sleep fifty hours in a day.”

“Fifty hours in a day? That is a high leveled technique...”

Ryner replied smugly when he heard this:

“How can you blame me for being a professional?”

“Oh, professional. It seems quite cool. Can I do it too?”

Ryner simply replied:

“You can’t.”

“.....I thought so too? But, let me dream for a while longer.”

“Then temporarily put down all your work.”

“.....No, if I do that.....”

“Then it’s impossible.”

Ryner was as simple as ever.

Sion laughed wryly, then said:

“Hearing you say that, I’m slightly hurt.”

As he said that, he raised his head slightly to look at the ceiling.

“Is there something?”

“The ceiling.”

“Ah, the ceiling? Uh uh. You must indeed be tired.”

But, Sion heard this...

“Alright, I’m resurrected!”

He sat up in one breath, arranging his messy silver hair, breathing out loud.

Then he told Ryner who sat from across him:

“Ne, let’s talk about work now?”

“Ah? You, you... can’t a monster... Ah, you really seem like you’re not tired...”

Ryner looked Sion’s face, scowling.

Sion laughed and said when he saw this:

“I’m very capable, right? I don’t usually go back to normal so fast.....It must be an effect of Ryner sleeping with me.”

“Ah! What an annoying effect...”

Ryner’s frown was even more severe than earlier.

Sion said:

“Perhaps? I felt regret after saying that.”

He laughed.

But.....that was the truth.

Because of Ryner’s blessing, he was saved.

He really thought so.

For this period, perhaps he had overworked.

But, it would be fine.

He could already remember his past self.

Even if the whole world was crazy, there wasn’t need to trouble himself.

Because, there was definitely a path that could be taken.

Because, he could remember his self who had believed in this...

Before Ryner, Sion laughed genuinely.

And Ryner looked at him who had regained a little strength with an unhappy expression...

Sion increasingly regained his energy, he looked at Ryner with an expression that said he was up to no good.

“Then, about work...”

“Ah, didn’t I say, I’ve been overworked this past few days, I’m almost dying of overwork, so let’s not talk about work...”

But Sion completely ignored his protest, continuing to say:

“That’s true, it’s rare for Ryner to return to Roland, there’s a lot of work to be done.”

“There’s no such thing...”

“Oh yes, where’s Ferris? Since you’re here, it means Ferris has returned too?”

“You... At least listen to other people speaking...”

Ryner said depressingly, then said:

“Ferris that person is like that~~ She told me like usual, ‘I’m not as free as you. I have to go somewhere. Go on ahead to Sion’s room first to prepare the assassination plan, I will head over later’, she clearly told me that, but she’s late... In addition, you weren’t coming either...”

Sion nodded, then continued for him:

“So, as you waited, you grew sleepy, and fell asleep?”

“No, I immediately fell asleep.”

“Ah... I see. Then Ferris went to buy dango?”

Ryner scowled again when he heard this.

“Ah, what is this! What is this! Ferris = dango. Ryner = afternoon naps. A simple equation like this must have appeared in your mind, right?”

“Eh? Is there anything wrong?”

Sion asked. Ryner thought about it for a while, perhaps he had thought it through?

“...No, it should be dango.”

“Then can we continue?”

“Yeah. It sounds negative, but it doesn’t matter.”

The topic of the two finally reached an agreement, Sion nodded, continuing.

“So, pushing this kind of job to you when you’ve just returned, makes me feel like not doing so...”

Ryner immediately replied when he said this:

“Then don’t push it to us.”

But, his protest was ignored.

“I want Ferris and Ryner to accompany me to Estabul.”

“Eeeeeeehhh?! We just returned? Are you a ghost? It’s too troublesome, I

don't want to."

"Yes, I'll need to explain the situation of Roland as of now..."

"No, what was the meaning of your 'yes' just now? I clearly said I'm not explaining, why are you starting to explain?!"

Sion still did not acknowledge that.

"Anyway, I will need bodyguards. Because the area outside Roland is too chaotic. Now that you have returned, I can relax. Didn't you say it often? You said, 'For Your Majesty, I can sacrifice my life, and take a shot for you!'"

"Who?! Who said that?!"

"It's now!"

"You..."

"Of course, if you don't listen to me, I will use the authority of the king's power to make you do things you don't like."

Sion said firmly. Ryner heard this.

".....You, you're saying cruel things deliberately, right.....?"

Ryner said with a trembling voice because of fear.

Sion's state of energy was the best he had seen recently.

In contrast.

".....Ah....."

Ryner's energy was greatly decreased...

Sion laughed when he saw this.

"Ne, anyway we don't have to leave immediately today or tomorrow, so you can rest for a while."

".....Ah....."

"Ah, that's right, you wanted Iris to bring back the two children called Arua, they seem to be in the land of the Eris family, they seem to be getting along well with Iris, will you go to visit him?"

Ryner had a little reaction after hearing this.

“...The Eris Family? You’re saying Ferris’s house? Arua is there? Then I’ll go visit him.....”

“No, help me first.....”

Ryner immediately stood up when he heard this.

“Ah! That, that’s right? I need to find Arua! Then, then it’s like that, good bye, Sion.”

Saying that, Ryner walked away shakily with an unenergetic appearance.

After watching him leave, Sion stood up to.....

“There’s still another matter.....”

He only spoke half of his sentence...

But, he stopped.

He turned to look at the ridiculously large book on the ground.....

“Ah, Ryner~ I only wanted you to help me pick this book up before you left.”

He said.



Before this.

The place was in the military institution in Estabul.

Although it was called that, but in actuality, the army of Estabul had been dispersed long ago, scattered around the country, to prevent the main force from raising a revolt...

Anyway, the place was in the military institution of Estabul.

The facilities of the Roland army were buildings with black as its main colour,

and the Estabul's facilities had many decorations. Some places were pictures with words, and others were made with a few square pictures.

Seeing this pictures, the mind would naturally evoke the feelings of 'obedience' and admiration'...

Looking at the picture hung on the wall in the hall of the military headquarters—

“.....Can these pictures evoke feelings... of 'obedience' and admiration'?”

The man asked doubtfully.

He had flaming crimson hair and sharp eyes.

His body was as solid and endurable like metal and he wore Roland's military outfit.

Anyway, everything about that man gave people a sharp impression.

Although, he was the current Field Marshal of the Roland army...

But in Estabul, this name was probably more famous than the title of Field Marshal?

The **Crimson-Fingered Claugh Klom**.

In this region, this name's meaning was no different than calling him a demon.

In many battles, the demon whose hands were stained red by the enemy's blood...

Claugh was now entering Estabul with a squad under Sion's orders.

Their mission was to reform the Estabul army, if there were hopeful talents, then they would arrange for them to have suitable positions in the Roland army.

Sion said, if they were really capable talents, he could even give them the position of the Field Marshal.

So now, he was interviewing people who seemed to be talented in Estabul...

“Ah, but I still don't see anyone suitable to be a Field Marshal.....”

Claugh, shrugged, then spoke behind his shoulder.

Behind him, a girl stood up.

She was a beautiful girl with deep blue long hair that was rarely seen in Roland.

A serene beautiful look with a pair of expressive, intelligent blue eyes that didn't make her seem like a seventeen year old.

She was the princess of the previously known Estabul, Noa Ehn.

She had felt sad about the Estabul nobles who had lost control of their actions and taken the people as hostages, single-handedly going against them, squashing the rebellion. And she successfully minimized the number of casualties through surrendering and negotiating, and was seen as a hero that saved the country, becoming a noble of Roland, she was literally a talented girl...

That was what was spread on the surface, but...

It wasn't that truthfully.

Noa had done that to protect the Estabul people who had fallen into Froaude's plan and had misunderstood... She clearly knew that she would be criticized by people, but she became a noble of Roland unhesitatingly.

And criticisms appeared.

Some people said she was a traitor, others scolded her for protecting her own life and stance, leaning towards Roland...

Claugh looked at Noa and said:

"Speaking of which, your dark blue hair is very special after all?"

Noa had a surprised expression when she heard this.

"Eh? Is it special? I feel that among the noble girls of Estabul, blue hair isn't so outstanding... After coming to Estabul, hasn't Klom-sama seen a few people?"

"Eh? Is that so?"

"Yes."

Claugh tilted his head skeptically again, then said:

“Is it? But, I don’t remember seeing other women’s hair being as pretty as yours.”

In an instant.

Noa’s face was stained red...

Her embarrassed look was indeed incomparably beautiful.

Claugh thought in his heart when he saw this.

That beautiful intelligent appearance, those evil comments weren’t enough to stay on her heart...

At this moment, a voice spoke from the front door of the hall.

“Is Clough Klom here?”

Hearing that, Clough laughed.

“Ah! I’m here!”

“I heard you’ve been teasing our princess Noa, is that the truth?!”

Claugh laughed when he heard this shout.

“If it’s real, then so what?”

“Of course I’ll kill you!!”

Yes.

No matter how many evil comments there were outside, Noa was still loved by the Estabul people.

From the beginning, it was Noa who introduced the talented people in the Estabul army and nobles to Clough...

At the same time, this kind of people would appear from time to time before Clough and the others.

These people were genuine idiots.

They would shout at the Crimson Fingert Clough Klom that all Estabuls recognized.

“Diiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiieeeeeee! Go!”

They shouted, rushing over with a terrible stance.

They really were genuine idiots...

Then—

“Ha, it seems they have their own uses.”

Claugh was also an idiot.

Noa could only shakily say from behind them:

“Ah, ah, be careful, Your Excellency... You too, actually challenging Field Marshal Klom... Ah, really...”

Noa said helplessly, not knowing which side she should support.

In that time, Clough and the Estabul youths had already started fighting.

They had the same dark blue, curly hair. And probably had not reached twenty years old? This youth was chanting the magic of Estabul—the magic using glowing words...

But, Clough saw this—

“Noooooooooooooisy!”

He leapt out at an amazing speed, kicking the youth’s face...

“Ah?!”

The battle ended like that.

Blood spurted out of the youth’s nose, and he flew away. Noa saw this—

“Ah, blood...”

She was still terribly fearful.

And, Clough didn’t notice this, he shouted:

“If you’re thinking of beating me with that sort of skills, then you’re early by a hundred years!”

And the youth got up, staring at Clough.

“Too, too amazing, the Crimson Fingered Clough is amazing indeed!”

“No, well, but you have your good points too.”

In a moment, the youth’s eyes gleamed.

“R-really?!”

“Yeah. What’s your name?”

“Namhen.”

“Then, Namhen, from now onwards, you are a Second Lieutenant.”

“S-second Lieutenant?! Of where?”

“Of course it’s Roland.”

“It, it can’t be?”

“Really.”

“But, I-I am an Estabul person?”

“So what? This is the order of the Roland king. He said, as long as they are capable people, then they can be appointed. He also said, if they have the ability, they can even become Field Marshals.”

“L-liar!”

“I’m serious, you’re very stubborn. Ne, listen carefully, go out to talk to the one in charge. Then you’re a Second Lieutenant. Besides this, tell this to the others, just say Claugh that person said: ‘I’ll take you on any time!’”

Namhen nodded vigorously when he heard this, then said:

“S-second Lieutenant... He’s good, the Roland king is really good!”

Saying that, he left the hall.

From morning till now, Claugh had already sent a few people flying in this fashion...

Noa looked at this with an uncomprehending expression.

“I-is this method really suitable...”

“Eh? It shouldn’t be any problem? And that kid is quite strong too.”

“Using power to determine the job, is that suitable?”

“It doesn’t matter. And although that kid looks a little foolish, but he has quite the spirit... I made this person’s status higher than Luke that person, and use this opportunity to tease that person who is a sergeant and is wandering freely outside the country happily.”

Claugh laughed bitterly with a depressed expression and said.

Noa seemed to feel troubled when she saw this, her eye brows forming a ^ shape.

“Why is it like this... Ah, but now thinking about it Klom-sama has always mentioned Sergeant Luke Stokkart in the past? When it was the revolution in Roland...”

Claugh nodded.

“Yeah. We were allies since that time. How should I say it? Listen to me...”

“Eh? Ah, yes...”

“That person, is an extremely energetic person? Because he is usually in charge of secret movements, so he is rarely in public... In truth, his successes are way more than mine.”

“And that person is now a sergeant?”

“Yes! It’s weird, isn’t it? I became a Field Marshal, and I’m sent to handle boring military administration tasks, and that person can carry out very important secret mission in parts of the world, how can there be something so unfair?”

Noa became silent in an instant after she heard that. Then she said:

“.....Klom-sama likes dangerous missions?”

“Yeah, well, because it suits me more than boring desk jobs.”

Then Noa nodded with an expression as if she understood.

“Then, I must thank Astal-sama indeed.”

“Ah? Why?”

Claugh turned back to ask.

Noa gave him a gentle smile when she heard that, then she bowed her head a little awkwardly.

“Because... I don’t want Claugh to go anywhere too dangerous...”

Noa suddenly said something so straightforward, Claugh heard that—

“Wha.....You, you.....”

In that moment.

“.....Tsk!”

An abnormally loud cluck of a tongue that had a mocking sound to it rang in the hall...

“Ah?”

Claugh turned his eyes to the entrance of the hall.

He saw a man wearing an Estabul uniform.

But Claugh immediately saw that this man was different from the previous challengers.

He seemed about twenty five years old, about the same age as Claugh?

Wavy tea-coloured hair, and same tea-coloured eyes, his eyes were filled with hate, and glared viciously at Claugh. There many wrinkles squeezed between his eyebrows, his mouth was twisted mockingly too.

An expression that he clearly hated Claugh.

Although he was not as tall as Claugh, but he was considerably tall, his back was very straight, and he wasn’t losing out in the looks department, it could even be said that he looked like a good youth, but...

This person was glaring fiercely at Claugh, his expression was contorted, Claugh’s first impression was so bad that it couldn’t be any worse.

Claugh couldn’t help but ask:

“You, do you hate me that much?”

The man heard this.

“.....Tsk!”

He clucked his tongue again.

But Noa called:

“Colonel Ba-Bayuuz...”

“Eh? Noa, you recognize him?”

Noa nodded.

“In Estabul, there isn’t a single person that doesn’t recognize Colonel Bayuuz. Although he isn’t as... famous as Crimson Fingered Claugh, but he is an extremely well known soldier...”

At this moment suddenly—

“Your Highness. I am honored that you still remember my name, I, Bayuuz White... am too touched, perhaps I will be unable to fall asleep tonight?”

As if he were a different person from earlier, he said that with an expression that made him look younger. Then he held his hand in front of his chest with a movement as elegant as a noble, bowing his head to express his gratitude.

Claugh couldn’t help but say:

“Your, your attitude...”

But, his words were interrupted again.

“...Tsk!”

The youth’s expression twisted again.

“.....”

It seems, he really hated Claugh. Claugh shrugged when he saw that.

“.....Ah~~ Forget it, it doesn’t matter if you hate me... Ne, you’re here...”

But, Bayuuz ignored Claugh, talking to Noa:

“I heard Your Highness was here to select officers...?”

“You, you.....I’m talking now.....”

“.....Tsk!”

“What are you tsing about! Are you an idiot? Talk properly...”

But, Bayuuz glared at Claugh even more unhappily, replying:

“Lowly pigs should keep quiet!”

“Pig?! I waited for you to open your mouth with much difficulty... You are very daring...”

Claugh’s expression seemed to slowly become more threatening, Noa hurriedly stopped him.

“Ah, ah, Field Marshal Klom-sama.....And Colonel White.....Ah, no White-sama, the two of you please...”

Claugh and Bayuuz both said at the same time:

“But Noa!”

“But Princess!”

Then they exchanged glares.

Noa revealed a helpless expression when she saw that.

“That, that, Bayuuz-sama...”

At this moment, Bayuuz suddenly knelt.

“Please call me Bayuuz, call me directly by my name Bayuuz, Princess. There isn’t any need for you to use formalities to address me.”

Claugh nodded when he heard this.

“Yes, Noa. Dealing with someone like this...”

But, he was interrupted immediately again.

“You useless maggot, no one is talking to you! Not only does an unremarkable maggot not know its place, it even calls the princess by her name directly without feeling embarrassed! How dirty, filthy!”

“You, you said I’m a maggot... You’re really pushing your luck, do you want to fight! You want to fight! Then fight! Noa, step back. I want to beat this guy up.”

“Eh? Ah, that...”

“Oh? A maggot can actually fight? That’s fine, I’ll play with you then. Ah, Your Highness, I am going to squash a pest, please move away, to prevent yourself

from being harmed unnecessarily.”

“Ah?! Ah, that...”

But, the two men didn’t care how panicked Noa was, the situation couldn’t be stopped.

He had already rolled up his sleeves, revealing his arms, a few tattoos of magical structures could be seen on his arms...

This was the reason why Clough was called the Crimson Fingert Clough.

When the tattoos on his arms glowed, Clough’s surroundings would become a sea of blood.

It was a very famous saying.

Clough glared at Bayuuz with a serious expression.

“Come, start! Aren’t you a very famous person? Let me have some fun.”

Clough said, preparing himself.

But Bayuuz remained at his position, not making any preparations for battle.

“Ah, don’t be so urgent, Clough.”

“Why are you calling me by my name suddenly?”

“Eh? Or you want me to call you Field Marshal Maggot-sama?”

“.....No, it doesn’t matter, let me send you flying with a kick.....”

Saying that, Clough heightened his senses, seeming to be able to fight any moment. But, Bayuuz stopped him with a hand.

“I said wait, you idiot.”

“.....You, you.....”

But Clough’s words were ignored, Clough mildly said with a steady expression:

“Firstly let me state the reason why I am here. Honestly speaking, I am here to be a Field Marshal.”

Clough’s pose relaxed slightly when he heard this, his eyes narrowed too.

“Oh? To be a Field Marshal?”

“Yes. As long as they are talented, they can become Field Marshals, isn’t that so?”

“If they are talented enough. Then, are you saying that you are very talented?”

Bayuuz nodded with an expression as if this were to be expected.

“You can tell right? Or are you blind because your eyes were eaten by insects?”

“.....Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah, I really want to kill you.....”

Because Clagh could tell with one glance that this man wasn’t just an underling, so it made him even angrier.

Presence, feet movements, the movement of his gaze...

It fulfilled all the conditions.

If he didn’t have this kind of personality, Clagh would really celebrate that he had finally found someone who was able to take up such a huge responsibility, but...

But, Bayuuz continued:

“On the other hand, I have already gathered many Estabul soldiers. Uh, actually speaking of which, even if I don’t open my mouth, they will gather over automatically. I am quite popular.”

“.....Oh.”

“We have enough people to start a revolution. But, I don’t want to do that. I... No, my only wish is to protect Her Highness.”

Saying that, he had a different expression when he went against Clagh, bowing his head towards Noa...

Clagh said when he saw this:

“I’m just curious, you... do you usually use the attitude you are using towards Noa, or the attitude that you are showing me to gather the other Estabul soldiers under you?”

Bayuuz simply replied when he heard this:

“Don’t ask such foolish questions. Other than you, do I have to use such foolish attitude towards other people! Ne, move further away from the princess! The stench from your body will stick to the princess’s body!”

“Ah, is that so...”

Clagh replied.

Things were like that.

Noa’s presence in this country was popular enough to view her as a god, so it wouldn’t be surprising that such a person would appear, but...

“So, because you are popular, you want to be a Field Marshal?”

But Bayuuz had an expression that said ‘are you an idiot’ as he replied:

“Why would I have to undergo your interview? I’m here to interview you. I want to see, what sort of person is the Field Marshal of Roland?”

“Then, you still want to fight?”

Clagh prepared himself again after he spoke, but Bayuuz shook his head.

“No, I know it just by looking. If I fight you face to face, I cannot win you. But, if we don’t use magic or weapons, and fight just with our physical bodies...”

“Oh? You mean, your physical fighting skills can win me?”

Bayuuz nodded.

“I am here today to let you know that.”

“Heh. Then let’s fight?”

“Yeah.”

“I’m coming?”

“Come.”

Then, the battle started.

Clagh leapt away from his original position like a bullet.

And, Bayuuz had an even faster reaction, no wonder he dared to say that with

so much self-confidence.

Bayuuz leapt back forcefully, causing the distance that Claugh had shortened to reduce to its original distance.

Then he reached behind him, pulling out a knife, throwing it over in one breath...

“We agreed not to use weaaaaaaaapons!”

Claugh couldn't help but shout when he saw that. As he shouted, he flicked the approaching knives in an instant.

But Bayuuz's attacks did not stop.

He started to write glowing words at an amazing speed in the air...

It was a pressurizing speed.

His speed and familiarity in writing magic, were both different from Namhen.

Bayuuz's fighting ability on magic couldn't be compared to Claugh?

If he allowed the other party to finish chanting his incantation, then there would be a limit to how he could defend...

Then, at this moment Claugh picked up the fallen knife that Bayuuz had thrown earlier...

Suddenly—

Bayuuz stopped the magic for some reason, shouting angrily:

“Stop! Put that knife down, Claugh Krom! You're too underhanded!”

“Who's underhaaaaaaaanded!!”

Claugh couldn't help but yell again.

The battle suddenly stopped like that...

Bayuuz spoke, and without changing his expression.

“Like that, we're tied.”

“How are we tied? You clearly said it was a battle depending on physical abilities... Uh, speaking of which, on the battle ground, words are a type of

weapon too. You must be thinking that the person who fell into this worded trap has problems with himself?”

“Uh...”

Bayuuz was momentarily speechless when he heard this. Claugh seemed to have guessed what he was thinking.

Claugh sighed when he saw this, throwing the knife back to Bayuuz.

“But, you are not wrong. Because trickery is the basis of fighting. I could tell with one look, you have a strong ability. You know that I have a strong power, even so, you still dared to challenge me with a plan. Not bad. I acknowledge your ability.”

“Is that so? You finally understood? Uh, but, I will not acknowledge you just like that...”

“What do I have to do to gain your acknowledgement...”

But in that moment, Bayuuz’s expression changed.

He had a completely different serious expression as he said:

“Didn’t I say it? I have many Estabul soldiers gathered under me, and I am their representative. Claugh Krom, what are you here for? To reform the Estabul soldiers? Then, what do you need to do?”

Claugh smiled when he heard this, staring at Bayuuz.

“...What do you want me to do?”

Just as he asked that.

A voice suddenly spoke from the entrance to the hall.

“Colonel Ba-Bayuuz! That person again...”

A young man wearing the same Estabul military uniform as Bayuuz, ran over as he panted. From the badge, he was Second Lieutenant?

“That person... That person has again...”

He seemed to be similarly conflicted.

Bayuuz nodded slowly when he heard this.

“...Calm down, Pasuur.”

He said with a low and calm voice, sharp eyes staring straight at the young officer.

With that sentence, the officer named Pasuur closed his mouth shakingly...

Clough saw that, and remembered something.

The meaning of the words and pictures on the Estabul military facilities' walls.

Obedience and admiration.

The eyes that Pasuur were looking at Bayuuz were filled with these two feelings. Obedience, and admiration that was stemmed from worship.

It was a person that people didn't think of.

Was this the real image of Bayuuz?

Soldiers willingly chased after him.

Bayuuz still used a calm voice to say:

“...Then, he's appeared? How many people have died this time?”

Pasuur revealed an expression that was conflicted and trembling because of fear and said:

“Th-that... The Belt village in the east has been nearly destroyed...”

This conversation made Clough narrow his eyes unconsciously.

From the contents of the conversation, it seemed like something like bandits had appeared, attacking the village.....

Was it like that?

The former Estabul officer had came to report this, that meant the Estabul soldiers that Bayuuz had gathered, were moving to maintain Estabul's peace.

But, this matter seemed bad.

Estabul that was swallowed by Roland, was responsible for maintaining Estabul's peace. But.....now it was taken up by Bayuuz's militants, it proved that there must be quite a number of soldiers under his command?

Perhaps what he said about having enough people to start a revolution wasn't nonsense.

And, Bayuuz did not trigger a revolution, instead he found Claugh.

That meant, he didn't want unnecessary bloodshed.

And that meant he thought, if peace could be maintained, it didn't matter if they were engulfed by Roland...

But, it wasn't being engulfed for nothing.

If he wanted to reform the army here and hand it to him to handle, he would display a similar sincerity, right?

Was that what Bayuuz was saying?

Of course it wasn't the formless 'sincerity' that the nobles always hung by their mouths.

It was true sincerity.

What they were asking from Claugh was the guarantee that Roland would protect Estabul's peace and dignity.

The burden was unbearably heavy.

And, how would this prove his sincerity?

Claugh said to Bayuuz:

"The village is being destroyed... that means, it's quite a large force of bandits? Alright, I'll let you see our sincerity. I'll take my troops to defeat those bandits."

But, Bayuuz glared at him viciously when he heard that.

"You'll defeat him....?"

Saying that, he scoffed at Claugh.

"Impossible. If you can defeat him, we'll follow you forever."

He said.

Claugh revealed a suspicious expression.

“...Ah? This bet is heavy. It’s only bandits, if I can defeat them, then you’ll follow me for the rest of my life...? Uh, talking about which, what is it about ‘him’? Are those bandits led by someone you know? That means, it’s a deserter from the former Estabul army...”

But, Bayuuz interrupted him, telling Pasuur:

“Is it really him? That...”

Pasuur nodded immediately and replied:

“It isn’t mistaken. Everyone in the village has been bitten to death...”

“Ah?!”

Claugh couldn’t help but shout when he heard that.

But Pasuur continued:

“And someone witnessed... that, that black hair... black clothes... and, and...”

Pasuur started to tremble suddenly. As if he were fearful of an unknown monster...

“And his eyes... in his black eyes, there was the cursed red image...”

Claugh finally understood after he heard that.

He understood what they were scared of.

He understood what they were fighting against.

The cursed image in the red eyes.

It was hated and feared by everyone, the evidence of people who bought ill omen to everyone.

It was hated and feared by everyone, the evidence of people who bought bad luck.

The evidence of an **Alpha Stigma** bearer.

If it were a normal **Alpha Stigma** bearer, although not easy to deal with, but as long as they moved the army, there was nothing to be expected.

Claugh had once led a team, to kill an **Alpha Stigma** bearer who had lost control and was killing people.

But, Bayuuz and the others were so scared...

Claugh thought of another matter.

It was a thing that happened very very long ago...

It was something that had happened a long long time ago, when Clough had just entered the Roland army...

When Clough saw the Alpha Stigma bearer, it wasn't a normal **Alpha Stigma** bearer.

He couldn't forget it now. The unlucky red pattern that was glowing in those eyes...

And that person was laughing as if crazy.

As if taking everyone, everything as fools as he laughed.

When going against that person, Clough's squad had been eliminated in a moment.

Clough had nearly lost his life.

Even so, he had crawled on the ground, attempting to escape.

As he cried in the sea of his companions' blood, he had desperately tried to escape.

That person laughed.

That person laughed.

He didn't mean to kill Clough.

He only laughed continuously.

He only continuously laughed without stopping.

Clough cried as he escaped.

That person saw this, laughing as he said:

"Ah..... Your slim arm.....looks very delicious?"

Then—

Claugh lost his right arm.

No, it should be said that half of what was under the joint of his right shoulder was eaten.

His tendons were bitten off, his shoulder was unable to move because of this, it could no longer move.

But that was no longer important.

Claugh could only cry continuously.

Because of pain and fear.

And that person laughed happily...

That was a memory of the distant past.

But, Clough's arm...

He touched the tattoo on his right arm that was the center of the part that had been bitten off.

Bayuuz said:

"The situation is terrible. He's not a normal Alpha Stigma bearer, he has already awakened. Can you defeat him?"

Claugh had a stiff smile.

".....Who can fight with that kind of mad monster....."

He softly muttered.

Chapter 3 I thought that I could reach him by just reaching out my hand

Ryner couldn't say anything.

The door in front of him.

Ferris's old house...

Because the door to the Eris house was so big.

It made him tilt his head back to examine it.

"...Ah~ They were originally a noble family, it would be suiting if their doors were huge, but...seeing this door, there really has a bona fide feeling. That person is really rich..."

He muttered to himself, and the atmosphere that door gave, facing that Ryner felt frustrated.

Actually, there wasn't anything special about this door. It was only a huge normal door made from metal and wood.

And compared to the residence of the other nobles, it could be said to be especially plain.

Even then, the air that this door gave off...

"It's almost like...a ghost house..."

Perhaps this was because on the way here, when he had asked passers-by for the address of the Eris Family, he had heard rumours about the Eris House, so he would have this feeling...

The Eris House.

The famous family that had been entrusted with protecting the king of Roland for generations.

It was a mysterious clan that definitely did not appear in public.

Honestly speaking, before meeting Ferris, Ryner was not very familiar with this famous House.

The Eris House seemed to be quite popular among the nobles.

That meant they were the strongest.

This sentence made him think of Ferris, he couldn't help but smile wryly.

"That's right..."

Just by seeing her valiant appearance, he would trust that anyone would say that?

Because even Ryner who was the strongest magician in Roland, was completely suppressed by her without the use of magic.

She controlled the speed of the movements of the physical body, going way beyond Ryner who depended on magic to speed up.

To be honest, her strength was abnormal.

How could she wield such strong power...?

Perhaps no one would be able to understand that?

So, this family had become a legend.

It was said that they were the strongest House.

The strongest House, that did not allow anyone else to catch up with them.

But, to this Ryner...

"How hilarious..."

He said with a sad expression.

Because he could easily imagine, how Ferris had trained to get that powerful martial arts.

Ryner knew how to keep that strong ability.

It was simple.

Abandon. Abandon everything that was useless.

Abandon all that was useless in strengthening their own body.

Abandon everything in order to get stronger.

Abandon happiness.

Abandon sadness.

Abandon anger.

Abandon pain.

“ ...”

Abandon dreams.

Abandon the future.

Abandon hope.

It was only then that they could be called that.

The strongest House.

Yes, because they were called that, in contrast, they lost everything.

Perhaps this place was that sort of place too?

So, Ryner looked at that simple door—

“.....Ah? How can this door be opened? If I knock, there probably wouldn't be someone who would run up saying, “I'm coming, I'll open the door immediately~” right? Ah, really, I have never visited a noble house before, I'm completely clueless on what to do. If that's the case, I'm going back.”

Just as he prepared to leave...

The door suddenly opened noiselessly.

“Ah?”

Ryner saw this, and raised his eyebrows.

Beyond the door there was a building that looked like a dojo, and a path leading to it, and at the side of this path there was the courtyard which was arranged neatly and cleanly.

Indeed it was a place that wasn't anything special.

It was normal.

Just by considering that it was the residence of a noble house, the environment beyond the door gave people an impression that it was simple, but even if there was anything else to be said there wasn't anything special about it.

But Ryner frowned when he saw it.

"Ah, even if the door is open, I'll just return for today..."

But.

"My apologies to have kept you waiting, Ryner Lute-sama."

A voice spoke from the door.

Ryner glanced to that direction, an elderly man with a straight posture, wearing a western suit stood there...

Ryner saw this:

"...You are?"

The elderly man replied with a serious expression:

"I am the butler serving the Eris House."

Ryner heard that, revealing an impatient expression.

"Butler...A butler. So? In this period, would a butler deliberately conceal their presence to approach visitors? And you concealed your presence long before you opened the door? This hobby is not desirable."

The elderly butler bowed his head and said:

"That...was ill-mannered. As expected of Ferris-denka's friend... Apart from the Eris House, this is the first time that my presence has been detected by a stranger."

But, Ryner didn't seem interested by this.

"Oh, so?"

"Yes. Please allow me to guide you through the Eris House."

"Guide? Didn't I say I'm leaving for today?"

“Eh? Returning? But you’re already here?”

“Uh... It’s fine that I came to take a look, but I suddenly felt like it was troublesome. Because I feel that the atmosphere is too gloomy. That building that seems like a dojo or something else over there makes me have a bad feeling, too... Is there something like ghosts inside it?”

Ryner said. The butler replied:

“No, there are no ghosts... But, you can’t leave like this. Or I’ll be scolded by the master.”

But—

“That has nothing to do with me.”

Ryner replied simply, turning around...

But at that moment, he stopped. Then—

“Ah, ojii-san, I wanted to ask you something.”

“O, ojii-san... Ah, yes. May I ask what is it?”

“Ah, it’s like that, you mentioned the master, right? Is the master Ferris’s parents?”

The butler shook his head.

“The present head of the Eris House is Lucile-sama... It’s Ferris-denka’s brother.”

“What about their parents?”

“...My apologies.”

It seemed like they were deceased.

“I~ see.”

Ryner nodded as if he could accept this, and returned his vision to the door again, looking at the dojo in front...

Then he turned back to the butler, using his eyes that were seemingly half-lidded because of exhaustion, to stare fixedly at the butler.

“...Then, Ferris was released at that time?”

In the moment that he said that.

The butler's expression changed, appearing to be completely different from earlier.

But Ryner continued:

"You must have scolded Ferris badly, right? I know just by looking at her. But, even so, Ferris' feelings have not died. In Roland's prison, I saw several people go mad because of the training, but... Ferris should be fine. Although it is near the edge...

Then, how long did this scenario last?"

The butler did not reply.

Ryner saw that.

"Reply me! How old was she?"

The butler stared at Ryner, speaking with a calm, but emotionless voice:

"Is that the reason why you are angry? So, you don't wish to enter the Eris House?"

Ryner heard that...

"..."

He shrugged:

".....No. Didn't I just say, because I felt it was troublesome, so I want to return? It's that, I feel a little like sleeping now. I overslept, so I feel a tad uncomfortable now... So, I will be returning for today. Please help me ask after Ferris, Iris, Arua and the others."

Saying that, he turned around again.

Then he took a few steps...

"She was fourteen years old."

The butler said.

Ryner heard that, stopping in his tracks.

The butler continued:

“...When Ferris-denka was fourteen years old, the preceding master passed away.”

Fourteen...

Ryner raised his head, upon hearing that, sighing.

Fourteen years.

“.....What a long period of time...”

Ryner’s voice rose emotionlessly.

It was a common matter.

Even if it was to an abnormal extent, but this was something that occurred frequently in this country.

In this mad world...

Everyone said that, then smiled.

They said that with a deadened expression, then smiled.

But, Ferris didn’t even know how to smile.

She didn’t even know how to laugh.

This would seem to be like a common joke.

So, Ryner also couldn’t help but smile...

“.....Haha. Really..... The only reaction to this matter is to smile.”

But his voice seemed to be as if he were suffering some sort of pain.

The butler also said:

“Yes...yes. But... You and people like Astal-sama, are now by Ferris-denka’s side, this truth is my only saviour.”

“.....”

Ryner looked at the butler with a stunned expression, upon hearing that.

“...You are also saved...”

The butler smiled when he heard that.

“Truly... Then, please save Ferris-denka. Ah, Ferris-denka is awaiting you now. Iris-denka too, even though Arua-san and Kuku-san are not in the residence, but they are always asking, has Ryner Lute-sama arrived, is he here...”

Upon saying that, a voice suddenly spoke from behind the butler.

The voice of a cute girl...

“O, ojii-san, it’s dangerous! You can’t approach that beast! Onee-chan said before, if that beast, if you’re touched by that beast you’ll become pregnant immediately!!”

And it was a noisy voice.

A girl of around seven, eight years old appeared at the doorway.

Shining golden hair and unbelievably beautiful features that a child should not have.

She wore a layered skirt.

She was Ferris’s sister, Iris Eris.

Of course, she looked like Ferris, but her expression was completely different.

Ferris was usually expressionless, but Iris was completely the opposite of her, her expression was like a child’s, changing constantly.

Upon seeing this mini Ferris, Ryner scowled.

“Ah, so I said it’s too troublesome, I’m going back home... That, it’s like that, Ojii-san, close the door, close the door, I’m going back.”

But the butler smiled widely when he heard that.

“Welcome, Ryner Lute-sama.”

“What welcome!”

Ryner shouted, preparing to escape, at this moment a black-haired youth of around six years old appeared beside Iris— “Ah, Ryner-sensei! You’re back!”

He was the youth, Arua, who had Alpha Stigma, that Ryner had taught magic to in the past.

Arua’s eyes were shining.

“Sensei, you’re back!! I, I’ve always been waiting for you! I learnt many new magicks... Please watch!”

Iris heard that:

“Alright! So as not to let the beast trouble other people, we’ll capture him immediately! Arua attack from the right!! I’ll attack from the left~”

“Yes! Iris Onee-chan!!”

Following that, hidden behind Arua, Arua’s little girlfriend Kuku said too:

“Good luck, the, the two of you!!”

Ryner saw that—

“What? What good luck? Ah, is this a kindergarten?!”

Saying that, he made to escape quickly from the scene, in that moment—

Sssh~ A familiar sound, that indicated that something sharp was slicing through the air sounded...

“Ah?!”

Just as Ryner turned back, it was already too late.

On the other side of the door, that was behind Ryner, Ferris had been standing there at some unknown point in time, she held a package from the dango store in her left hand, and her sword in her right.

“What are you squabbling about in front of someone’s home?”

As she said that, she swung her sword towards Ryner’s face...

Clang!!

“Ah?!”

It was the usual set of events.

Ryner sprawled fearfully on the ground, glaring at the butler with a heated expression.

“.....Hey, hey! Ojii-san, wasn’t Ferris waiting in the house?”

But, the butler ignored him, bowing to Ferris as he said:

“You’re back, Ferris-denka. Did you find any delicious dango today?”

Ferris nodded forcefully.

“Eh. I found dangos that were quite good today. I’ll share a few with Croselli.”

“Ah, that would make them happy.”

“Eh. Ne, Iris, Arua, Kuku. We’re starting the dango party.”

“Great!!”

Saying that, Ferris entered the Eris House.

The butler that she called Croselli also entered the Eris House.

And then—

The door closed in the face of Ryner who was sprawled in the doorway.

And it was closed very simply.

The previous words about “you can’t return like this”, “I, I was always waiting for you!” and such were treated as if they had never been spoken, no one spared a single glance at Ryner...

“..... It can’t be?”

Oddly, Ryner actually felt as if he were about to cry because of the loneliness in life, in that moment...

The door cracked open slightly.

Ferris poked her head out threw the gap, smiling widely.

“Hehehe.”

“.....”

Following that Iris, Arua, Kuku peeked out from behind the door, the three people cheerfully sported cheeky smiles that were annoying.

“Hehehe.”

“.....”

Last of all, the butler peeked out too, and he said happily:

“We’ve been waiting for you. Ryner Lute-sama. Welcome to the Eris House.”

“.....”

Just like that, Ryner completely hated the Eris House.

Yes.

It was a regular occurrence.

Even if there were some differences to the extent, it was something that happened commonly in the country.

Ryner thought.

But...

Ryner stood up, passing through the door to the Eris House.

The dango party seemed to be held in the courtyard in front of the dojo.

He walked into the dojo, it was a large but dark dojo.

It was an empty, isolated dojo.

But, strangely...

Iris and Arua and Kuku couldn't stop making a racket.

Ryner heard that—

“Ah, how noisy...”

But, even the joyful sounds of these children seemed to be absorbed by the empty space in front of them...

Sucked into that dark, black place in front of them...

The odd atmosphere made Ryner frown.

“What is that?”

It was too quiet here.

The empty space, the sound of everything being quiet... It was like even feelings were sucked in...

The joyful sounds of the children were clearly echoing everywhere, yet...

That place seemed to be so still that there wasn't even a single sound...

Why would he have that sort of feeling?

Ryner surveyed his surroundings.

The dojo that was lined with wooden boards, and had no dust at all, didn't seem to have any magic cast upon it...

Ryner cautiously tried to open his eyes slightly.

In that moment, a glowing red pattern appeared in his eyes.

This was the pattern of the red eyes that was cursed.

It was evidence of catastrophe that everyone hated.

The glowing red five-pointed star named **Alpha Stigma**.

This pair of eyes could decipher all magic in this world with one glance.

What was this magic constructed from?

How could it be activated, what kind of consequences would it have? How strong was its power...

Ryner could understand it with one glance, and could use it.

Ryner used his eyes to look at the dojo.

"..."

A black darkness.

A silent dojo.

And then...

The feeling of something that was apart from the silence.

It existed, **nothingness**.

It was **nothingness**.

The real **nothingness** lay there.

Ryner widened his eyes.

He opened his eyes widely.

"Ah..."

He could only let out this sound.

His body was trembling.

As if someone had grabbed his chest tightly, the absolute, **nothingness**.

As if it had coloured everything black, the absolute **nothingness**.

But there shouldn't be this kind of thing...

This... this sort of thing...

--Madness.

He felt.

If this continued—he could go mad.

He felt.

The emptiness of the thing that lay there was to this extent.

Confusion.

His vision turned black, his heart was turned black too...

It was a darkness that he had never seen before.

It was a blackness that he had never seen before.

There was something deeper in that darkness.

In the deep center of that blackness...

“Ah, ah, aaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhh”

At this moment—

Ryner escaped.

He couldn't stay here any longer.

Scary.

It was too scary!

What was that thing.

What was this place...

Run.

Run.

Run to the place where the blackness disappeared.

Until nothingness became existence.

Then.....



Yes.

This was something that occurred frequently.

Ryner thought.

Even if there was something different in its extent, it was a common matter in this country.

“.....A common...matter?”

Running from the dojo, Ryner turned back as he panted ceaselessly, as if he were moaning.

Although he had thought of a plan to escape the darkness... but, his thumping heart still couldn't stop resounding.

What on earth was that?

What...

At this moment Ferris walked over.

“Ryner, why are you like that?”

Following that, Arua, Kuku and Iris stared at him with unsettled expressions...

An expression as if they were fearing something.

Ryner saw that...

“Ah? Ah, that...”

He clutched his stomach and said:

“Ah, that, no, I’m hungry. Can we eat earlier?”

Arua heard that.

“Eh?! Ryner-sensei, you ran like that because you were hungry?”

Kuku laughed:

“Pig.”

Iris said, too:

“Ah! That, greedy people will become fat. Then they will float away like balloons? Onee-chan said that. Right, Onee-chan?”

When Ferris heard that, she stroked Iris’s head with a satisfied expression, replying:

“Uh. You’re very clear on that. That’s great.”

“That’s great! Onee-chan praised me!”

Arua and Kuku looked at Iris who was laughing happily, and couldn’t help but whisper to each other.

“Iris Onee-chan has a little of a sister-complex?”

“Ah, eheh.”

The two of them spoke, then noisily began to prepare for the dango party.

But, Ryner was unmoving.

Although he had forcefully faked it earlier, but...

He was sweating.

Because of the extreme fear... His body couldn’t stop trembling.

Even so, he activated the **Alpha Stigma** again, examining the dojo...

No, examining that darkness.

Then, he spoke to Arua who was busy preparing the dango:

“Hey, Arua, come over for a second.”

“Eh? What is it?”

“Come here, come here, it’s a talk between men.”

Hearing that, Ferris, Iris and Kuku started to say bad things about Ryner again, although Ryner heard it, but he didn’t have the luxury to worry about these petty matters.

He spoke to Arua:

“I need your help with something...”

“Yes?”

“Can you look at that dojo with your **Alpha Stigma**?”

“The dojo? Yes, what—”

“Don’t ask.”

Arua heard that, revealing a vexed expression.

“Is this some sort of training?”

“Ah, eh, I guess? Anyway, look at it. If you feel that something is not right, close your eyes immediately, alright?”

When Arua heard that, he had a surprised expression.

“Eh? Ah, I, I’m sorry. Before sensei finished speaking, I already used **Alpha Stigma** to look at it.”

“Ah?! You already saw it?”

“Yes. I saw it.”

He was right, Arua’s black eyes had the same red five-pointed star like Ryner.

Then...

“And then? What should I do now?”

Arua asked Ryner.

He spoke with a calm face, as if he completely didn't see that darkness...

"Uh, and then?What is going on? Can you really see nothing?"

"Nothing.....I can see the dojo?"

"Apart from that?"

"Apart from...that? That..."

Arua desperately stared at in the direction of the dojo, then:

"Uh, that, and the door to the dojo, and the stone in the courtyard before it, and..."

Ryner interrupted him.

"Ah, I know. It's fine."

Saying that, he hugged his arms.

It seemed that, Arua really didn't see that.

Then, what were the conditions to see that?

Was it not dependent on the **Alpha Stigma**?

Or was Arua's **Alpha Stigma** unable to see, because there was some difference in the structure of Arua's and Ryner's **Alpha Stigma**?

For example, the things that the two person's **Alpha Stigma** could see were different?

That meant, previously, the Gastark spies Sui and Kuu also said in surprise that, Ryner's Alpha Stigma wasn't the normal **Alpha Stigma**... was that related to this?

Anyway, what was that...

As he frustrated over this, Arua said:

"Ah, that... that sensei... I, did I not do it well? I failed?"

"Ah?"

Ryner looked to his side, discovering that Arua was actually revealing a tearful

expression, Ryner panicked when he saw this.

“Ah, no no. You passed! Amazing, Arua is really amazing.”

“But, but, sensei’s expression was really bad...”

“That, that’s because of that, that! I haven’t seen Arua in so long, you’ve grown so much, so I’m frustrated over, at the level you are at now, what training should I let you do in the future.”

Arua heard that.

“R, really?!”

Arua’s expression immediately brightened up.

“Eh, really really.”

Ryner sighed.

After confirming that Arua was stepping away happily, returning to prepare for the dango party again...

He asked the butler:

“I say, Ojii-san, can I ask you something?”

“Yes. What is the matter? Ryner Lute-sama.”

Ryner heard that, pointing in the direction of the dojo.

“The interior of that dojo... What is there?”

“It’s Lucile-sama’s room.”

“Oh?”

So Ryner used **Alpha Stigma** to look at the dojo again.

But, it was still a sea of darkness.

There truly was nothing.

But, he seemed to be mostly accustomed to it.

Ryner looked at that large nothing, saying:

“...I see. It’s Ferris’s brother’s room? I’m quite interested in that side. And I want to greet him, can I take a look?”

But, the butler replied with an apologetic expression:

“I apologize, I can fulfil your request. Lucile-sama’s rooms... No, behind that dojo, including me, even Ferris-dono and Iris-dono are unable to enter half of the grounds. Only the current head of the Eris House is able to enter, it is this generation’s...”

“This generation’s head’s order?”

The butler nodded.

Faced with this situation, Ryner had an uninterested expression.

“.....What a pity.”

He shrugged.

Even so, his vision did not move from the dojo.

Leaving the nothing that was concentrated there.

Perhaps it was ready?

The dango party started.

But, Ryner’s eyes did not move from that dojo.

He stared unwaveringly at that nothing, as if seeing through everything.



So, that started.

It could truly be said that somewhere in the gears, a link had been loosened.

No...

Everyone had already detected it, this world was mad.

This world was mad, but, people could only smile helplessly.

Even if it were a mocking smile...

They could only smile helplessly.

Because, the world didn't end because of that.

Because, the pain didn't end, the world had not reached its end.

But...

Was it really like that?

Everyone walked their own path.

Was it really like that?

Although many things had been lost, but time still pushed on without stopping.

Was it really like that?

The nostalgic days passed in a blink of an eye.

Even the new things obtained that were could not be trusted were better than the past.....

Time passed...

Pushing the backs of people forward.

Even so, they could still hope for a better future...

People who had wild ambitions.

People who had stopped.

People who looked back to the past.

People who took afternoon naps...?

But, if all roads—

Weren't in truth scrambled up...?



Anyway, something happened.

This was something that could be trusted.

“But, what is that...”

Lieutenant Milk Callaud narrowed her round eyes.

She was already sixteen years old.

And she took on the duty of preventing her own country’s magic secrets from being leaked to other countries, the duty of the captain of the elite squad who was responsible for chasing down or eliminating people who had studied Roland’s magic escaped out of the country or left the country.

But, she was still a very adorable girl, it was accurate to use a girl to describe her.

She had brown hair in a ponytail, a cute doll face, and a small but straight frame.

With such an appearance, she frowned seriously...

“Ah... Today’s Captain Milk is very obedient too...”

Milk’s subordinate, Sergeant Luke Stokkart who was the next in order of command for the mission, said with a loving and relaxed expression as if he were a parent looking at their child.

For some reason, Luke had white hair, although he was at most twenty five years old.

And, when the revolution began in Roland, he was one of the important characters with Sion and Claugh in the revolutionary movement, he was an extremely capable person.

But...

In front of Milk, he was always!

“.....I’ll buy sweets for you later.”

Seeing that, the superior of the two, Major General Rahel Miller’s dangerous and unhappy expression became more unpleasant.

“.....Sw, sweets?!”

He sighed.

Just to mention, they were currently in the military headquarters in the Roland Empire, the office of the Taboo Breaker Pursuit Squad.

This was a building that carried a threatening aura, surrounded by black walls.

Chasing after Taboo Breakers, entering the Runa Empire... Then passing through the Iyet Republic, at last Milk’s group had returned to Roland after a long time, coming forward to report to their commanding officer.

Miller said:

“...Then, Callaud, why do you have such an unpleasant expression?”

“.....”

But Milk seemed to be distracted by something else, and did not reply.

Luke hurriedly replied:

“Ah, ah, Major General Miller. How should I start? We just returned, and we’re a little tired... Furthermore, if you want to talk about unpleasant expressions, I think Major General Miller’s expression is not too bad...”

Hearing that, Miller glared viciously at Luke, Luke only shrugged...

Miller saw that, then sighed again.

He looked at Milk again, she was still distracted...

At this moment, she seemed to think of something—

“Ah! Major General Miller! Milk Callaud is here to report!”

She spoke energetically now.

Luke was frantic for a moment again, Miller sighed again.

“.....Forget it. I understand. We will talk about this again from that place. Then, can I hear your report?”

When he said this, Milk stared at the ceiling with a blank expression.

“Pay attention!!”

Miller couldn't help but yell.

But, his yell did not have any effect on the distracted girl.

She only thought blankly. Sporting a blank expression as if trying to find the missing puzzle pieces of the soul...

She muttered softly:

“Roland... Taboo Breaker... Long ago... promise...”

Seeing her like that, Miller spoke to Luke with an impatient expression:

“What on earth is going on? When did she become like this?”

Luke replied with a troubled expression:

“...From this morning. Since we received the news that the Taboo Breaker Ryner Lute returned to Roland... when we returned here it started.”

Miller narrowed his eyes when he heard that, staring at her for a while, then...

“Anyway, Luke, let her return. Rest a while first...”

But, at this moment Milk's eyes suddenly turned to Miller, immediately saying:

“Ah, ah, I, I'm sorry!”

“Eh? You're paying attention?”

“Ah... yes. I'm sorry. No, my thoughts are finally organised... It's fine.”

Miller heard that, asking with an increasingly threatening expression.

“Thoughts... What thoughts?”

But Milk immediately replied:

“About my mission.”

“Mission...? I think, your mission... your assignment is to receive my orders, to

chase after the Taboo Breakers?”

“Yes.”

“Then, what is making you so troubled?”

Milk did not think about it, immediately replying:

“About order outside of that.”

It was really said unthinkingly

It was really too straightforward.

The words that she used were so straight forward that if by accident she slipped, she could be jailed for insulting a commanding officer...

Miller nearly laughed out loud, but he held back from laughing, in order to maintain his tense expression.

“.....Uh, regarding the movements outside of your assignment, I really don’t want to interfere..... But, your current situation can’t be regarded as good, it will clearly affect the mission. Because of that you may cause your own life, and even your subordinates’ lives to be exposed to danger.”

The phrase “even your subordinates’ lives may be exposed to danger”, made her react.

She suddenly revealed a tearful expression.

“I, I’m sorry...”

She bowed her head and apologised.

But, this was enough.

If she understood this, then whatever she was thinking about was her own personal matter.

There wouldn’t be any problem.

As long as she regarded her companions to be important, there wouldn’t be any problems.

Yes.

Miller treated the people of the Taboo Breaker Pursuit Squad as family, so he

created this organisation.

Luke or Lach, Lear, Moe could inherit this spirit, and Milk could probably let it continue?

And as long as this spirit could continue existing, this country could probably experience peace for a period of time?

Miller thought.

Sion and Claugh were controlling the upper tiers.

Then, as long as the lower tiers were reinforced by Luke and the others, the country wouldn't collapse so easily...

Then at this moment—

“.....What direction will this country be progressing in?”

Suddenly, Milk asked that...

She stared at Miller with a straightforward expression.

Miller nearly laughed out loud, when he saw that.

What an interesting child.

What direction would this country progress in?

It was a really straightforward problem, it was so straightforward that it would make people envious...

Miller desperately tried to hold back his laughter and replied:

“.....What direction will this country progress in... How should I say, it's not something that we can decide.”

But, Milk tilted her head when she heard that.

“Then who will be the one to decide?”

It was another straightforward question.

Hearing that question, Miller suddenly had a feeling as if he were a kindergarten teacher, looking at Luke as if pleading with him.

But, Luke looked upon this scene joyfully, watching on wordlessly...

His expression said this:

“Captain Milk is very cute, right? Come, let Miller-senpai be charmed and become her slave as well.”

Miller glared viciously at Luke again.

So Luke replied with a wide smile...

He was indeed an irritating person.

Miller thought.

And Milk stared at him with shining eyes...

Miller couldn't help it, he could only reply.

He said with a tone that could not count as a friendly and happy one:

“.....Who decides where this country will progress? That is quite a difficult question, I'm not too certain... But, I think the path that the country progresses on is created by 'opportunities'.”

“‘Opportunities’?”

“Eh. That period, the hopes of the people at that time, the nobles' hopes, the world's hopes... and the hopes of the person who was chosen...”

At this moment—

“To become the king of this country... is it?”

“Yes.”

Miller nodded.

Although he had not completed the sentence, she already understood.

Yes, she was a clever child after all.

Otherwise, she wouldn't be able to become the captain of the squad at such an age.

Luke also wouldn't chase after her helplessly.

A smart child...

Milk continued:

“Then, if king that world wishes is good enough, then this country will progress smoothly.”

“Yes, that can be said to be so.”

“You’re saying, Sion Astal-sama who is called the **Hero King** became king, so this country can progress smoothly?”

“I reckon so.”

So Milk nodded.

“The people of this country think so too.”

“Probably? He... His Majesty is the best monarch in this country’s history...”

Then, hearing that, Milk’s expression scrunched up sadly.

He didn’t know why she was so upset, appearing as if she were really about to cry...

“Why do you have that kind of expression?”

Hearing that, she replied simply again:

“.....Because His Majesty is very pitiful...”

In that moment.

“.....”

Miller couldn’t speak.

Because her words...

Milk continued:

“..... A king that is anticipated... The **Hero King** who definitely cannot make a mistake... It’s impressive. Being able to be called that is truly an impressive matter. Astal-sama can definitely change this country. Everyone would expect that nothing bad would happen. This country wouldn’t suffer from anything bad again... And His Majesty has to respond to the people’s needs honestly. But, the more he responds, the more...”

“.....”

“A distorted future will definitely appear. But, I... I’m really foolish. In the

beginning, I clearly had obtained all the information. The distortion appeared... Then..."

She spoke until here.

But, it was already enough.

What Milk was troubling over...

That was...

At this moment, Milk frantically said:

"Ah, no, no! I'm thinking about my own things again..."

But, Miller shook his head.

".....No, this is quite an interesting discussion. Ne, why don't you return first? You look a little tired... The rest of the report can be handled by Luke?"

Miller said, ordering Milk to return.

After she bowed her head to Miller, she left the room.

It really seemed that she was troubling over something...

Staring at her disappearing back, Miller narrowed his eyes.

Then he turned his eyes to Luke.

".....What a thoughtful child."

Luke smiled happily when he heard that.

"And she really is a smart child."

Although he said that...

Miller used his fingers to touch his head, as if suffering from a headache.

"No one has ever used her perspective... to look at His Majesty."

Luke smiled:

"Eh, ah, of course, because after all Sion-sama is one of the chess pieces on the picture that Miller-senpai drew—the chess piece to change this country."

But, Miller revealed an unhappy expression.

“I have never looked at him from that perspective.”

“Of course. Me too. I’m only saying, the reality is like that. And Sion-sama is too talented. He is running far beyond and faster than what Miller-senpai had hoped and planned. It’s a map that was clearly drawn by Miller-senpai, but he released a light that could control and link everything together. That person really is... a person born to be king.”

Yes.

This man Sion Astal, was really a man born to be king.

When Miller found this light Sion Astal, the revolution seemed to have succeeded.

The opportunity chose him.

Opportunity.

Citizens.

The world.

They desired a person like Sion to appear.

It wasn’t Miller’s choice, it wasn’t Miller who chose him...

If it were to be said, it was the opposite, it was Miller and the others who coincidentally bowed down to this light Sion.

And then...

“.....Was it really like that? Was my choice right?”

Luke shrugged.

“Saying something like this now... Anyway, apart from Sion-sama, can you think of anyone more fitting to be the king of this country?”

“No.”

“At least I haven’t seen a well-known monarch like Sion-san.”

“...Yes, so, I chose him.”

So Luke said simply:

“...Then there’s no problem. There’s no need to be so worried and depressed. That person is a strong person. About this point, we are the ones most familiar about it.”

He said.

Miller looked at Luke.

He felt that he really had a talented subordinate. Looking at Luke who had always worked hard as a left hand and right hand to help him, Miller really thought so.

If there wasn’t him, most of the matters would almost be unable to progress smoothly?

In the past Miller was called a genius.

In the previous Roland, he was once hailed as that.

A genius...

Because his magic was slightly better than others.

Of course, his military magic strength was more powerful than Luke’s?

Because his physical arts were slightly better than others... Even if he were to fight with Luke one-on-one now, he probably would have the advantage?

But even so, the word genius belonged to Luke.

Miller thought.

He always used an unchanging smile, outstanding calmness and analytic skills to carry out every mission.

He cut down everything useless, accomplishing the assignment.

He was so talented...

But this didn’t determine that he could not be harmed.

When he calmed down and thoroughly analysed.

When he cut down everything useless.

He wasn’t completely free from harm.

And, the assignment he was currently in charge of...

Miller said:

“...It’s hard, right?”

But, Luke revealed a steady smile.

“No. Because I like to protect my family. It’s Miller-senpai who allowed me to know the joy in this, wasn’t it?”

“...I’m always pushing jobs that other people do not want to you...”

Even so, Luke smiled with a steady expression.



The sky started to darken.

Roland’s sky began to be stained red.

Since the Taboo Breaker Pursuit Squad stepped on the road home... in the past as long as she could see this sky, she would feel a little comforted, but...

Now Milk didn’t have that feeling.

She was defeated by her foolishness.

This country’s king, Sion Astal.

She recalled his figure.

Elegant silver hair, and a determined pair of eyes.

Milk had seen him several times...

He was always so perfect.

A warm smile, sophisticated movements.

Everything was so perfect.

As long as it was a girl, her heart would probably be stolen away by him?

The reason of the people’s expectations of him could not be spoken of.

The reason of the country's expectations of him could not be spoken of.

He held everything.

Was that because what the opportunity wanted?

Was that because it was what the world wished?

He had everything perfectly...

That kind of perfectness seemed like as long as it was touched slightly, it would immediately collapse...

And—

“It's like...”

It was akin to the youth that Milk knew, who had saved her.

That youth had an abnormally large amount of magical knowledge and fighting prowess, outstanding survival skills and mental capabilities.

Of course, in the orphanage that she stayed in previously, that reckoned that only determined power was justice, he was also a star.

A perfect killing weapon.

No troubles.

No fear.

No confusion.

No death.

He had everything.

He had everything perfectly.

And, he always had a brittle expression that would collapse at a touch, his face contorted sadly...

“I... am really foolish! In the beginning... I clearly had all the information...”

Roland...

Taboo Breaker...

The promise made long ago...

The promise of marriage...

In the distant past... the promise with Ryner.

He shouldn't have forgotten that promise, but...

No, uh... If she correctly remembered, they actually didn't have a clear engagement...

But when they met again, his attitude was as if he didn't even know she existed... His movements were really too strange.

Why?

Why did he act like that?

Why?

Why did he say he didn't recognise her?

Why?

Why?

Regarding this point, Milk guessed this—

Ryner was involved in a huge problem, a problem so huge that he was unable to freely express himself.

It was so huge that he had to make the decision to be chased around as a Taboo Breaker, and had no choice but to leave Roland.

But—

When they met, Ryner had said this:

“The, the most important is, we're following Sion's orders...”

Sion.

Although this name wasn't a rare name, but it wasn't a very common name either.

So when she heard this name, Milk had thought... 'Sion' this name was the key.

The person called 'Sion', was probably the head of some criminal organisation

that was using Ryner?

Then, how should she save Ryner from that criminal organisation?

“...”

It was too silly.

Ryner was a genius.

What criminal organisation... Why would I have thought that?

No, did she really understand?

But she didn't want to follow that train of thought, because that way, it signified she couldn't be helped.

But... even so...

Milk scrunched up her cute face seriously, murmuring:

“The perfect king, and the perfect killing machine...”

Milk's whole body trembled.

Because this perfect king was too perfect—

He had even fallen to the depths of loneliness, his whole person was distorted.

Because this perfect killing machine was too perfect—

He had even been unable to stand his hands that had killed people, his spirit was distorted.

Milk shuddered.

Because of my presence.

“I...”

She was suddenly promoted.

To be the captain of the Taboo Breaker Pursuit Squad.

At that moment, Sion smiled.

That lonely king revealed a perfect smile, but in the depths of his smile there was sadness...

But, but!

It seemed...

“To save Ryner...”

The sunlight was already slanted, the surroundings darkening.

It was already nightfall.

It was a night that was no different than the others.

But, it was too dark.

She had that feeling.

The future that this country was progressing towards was... too...

The darkness of the night covered it up.

The darkness deeply, deeply, deeply covered Milk...

Suddenly, from the darkness a shape appeared. In front of Milk, a black beast was formed...

Then—

Black hair and eyes that could freeze someone appeared...

“.....I have come to receive you, Lieutenant Milk Callaud. Can you accompany me for a while? Everything, will start from here?” A man with the evil smile like a devil, appeared before Milk.



Numerous hours later.

In the late night where everyone was sleeping deeply.

Ryner ran desperately.

He left the hotel that was on the street, passing through the street, then...

When he entered the district of the noble's mansion area, his presence disappeared.

It was cloudy today, even the moonlight was dim.

The slight moonlight...

Darkness.

This kind of night, Roland was caged by the darkness.

A moonless night.

But as long as there was some light from the starlight, it was already enough for Ryner.

He quietly, quickly stepped surely in the dark.

His movements were carried out that skilfully...

Perhaps even the professional assassins couldn't keep up with him?

Ryner saw the huge door in front of him, narrowing his eyes.

It was the large door of the Eris House that he had visited earlier in the day.

He looked at the door that did not easily let others approached, that was shut tightly...

But, he didn't stop.

He used the wall beside the door as a stepping stone, leaping smoothly.

One step, two steps, three steps—

Just as he ran up the wall—

“Heh...”

He reached out and grasped the top of the door, then used one hand to forcefully push his body up...

In a moment he had successfully infiltrated the interior.

It was almost completely soundless.

“Uh...”

Ryner looked around him.

The area was so large, even if he made the slightest sound, perhaps no one would notice...

According to the information he received, don't even mention Arua and Kuku, even Ferris and Iris seemed to live in the building furthest from this door.

That meant, this door didn't seem to be the real entrance...

It could said that it was the closest entrance to the interior of the Eris House.

“.....”

Ryner stared at the destination before him.

It was a dark dojo that had an unpleasant atmosphere.

It seemed that this place regardless of whether it was day or night, was the same.

It was as if time had stopped, only nothing was occupying it.

Ryner saw that.

“Uh... Then, where should I start investigating?”

Ryner said, starting to walk ahead.

His presence was still very mild, but he hadn't completely wiped it out, because this place was too quiet.

It was the first time in his life.

It was completely quiet.

“Really, if I knew it were so challenging I wouldn't have done it...”

Ryner frowned.

Even so, he still continued forward soundlessly.

It was an easy matter to enter the dojo.

Like in the day, the empty, isolated dojo.

Mats were laid out everywhere, it seemed abnormally silent... It was so quiet that it could cause people to have the wrong impression, misunderstanding that there was a magic that could cut off sound cast here.

It was so quiet that all sound seemed to be removed from reality, sucked into the darkest depths...

Ryner saw this—

“According to this situation, I am a fool to have slipped in soundlessly...”

Ryner smiled wryly.

But even so, he wiped away his presence, surveying his surroundings again.

The quiet, extremely quiet dojo.

There wasn't anyone's presence, it should be said there wasn't any living presence.

The only thing that made people think of was death.

Nothingness and death... and fear.

Uh, coming alone to such a dark dojo in the middle of the night, it was natural to feel scared right...

But, the true nothing lay before him.

At least, in the eyes of Ryner's Alpha Stigma that was the case.

Arua couldn't see it, but Ryner could...

“How can I not investigate into this?”

Ryner walked forward again. Walking into the dojo.

There was still no sound.

Wooden boards were laid on the ground, at least there should be a slight echoing sound off the boards...

“Talking about which, is this wood?”

Ryner couldn't help but squat, confirming the material.

He touched the floor, discovering that it was really wood...

He knocked it lightly with a finger... a small knocking sound was made, then this sound seemed to be sucked into some place, at an abnormal speed and disappeared.

“.....This situation is truly a little odd...”

That uncomfortable feeling made Ryner frown again.

He stood up, then walked forward again.

He passed through several open doors, then walked and walked, it was still an empty dojo...

“How large is it.”

He muttered to himself.

Walking for so long, it was still a large dojo.

But—

The next door.

It was the door leading to the back of the dojo that the butler had said was forbidden.

From this place onwards, it seemed that Ferris and Iris were also forbidden from entering...

The place that only the current head of the Eris House could enter.

So.....

“.....”

Ryner stood before the door, opening his eyes widely.

A red five-pointed star appeared in the middle of his eyes.

He discovered that expanded before his eyes was still, **nothingness**.

And, it was slightly different from the **nothingness** from earlier.

It had no presence.

But, inside it there was... something that could only be described with **nothingness**...

That **nothingness**...

Nothingness slightly...

“Ah?”

He could only let out this sound.

Suddenly, a fear that pressed down on his chest attacked...

In that moment, Ryner escaped from the scene.

He jumped back forcefully, attempting to escape from the doorway...

But, Ryner's eyes didn't move from the door.

How... Where had it appeared from?!

A man stood in front of him at some point in time.

A strange man.

Golden hair that grabbed attention even though they were in the darkness.

Calmly closed eyes, and a slim body.

It was a man who had abnormal, and could even said to be an uncomfortable seductive beauty...

Concentrated in the air around him was a quiet...

No, it was nothingness?

It was the same.

The same as this dojo...

Ryner said:

“.....Are you Ferris's brother?”

The man said:

“Yes. I am Lucile Eris. You are Ryner Lute?”

Existence and Nothingness continuously changed as if fighting against each other, a voice that caused people to fear.

A voice that was steady but was commandeering, titillating uneasy feelings.

Lucile smiled widely.

“Ferris seems to get along well with you... I always wanted to meet you alone.”

He smiled.

But, in that moment—

“.....”

A killing intent burst out from him, a killing intent that normal people would be unable to imagine.

If he were a normal person, he could be killed by this killing intent accidentally?

This was Ferris’s brother, Lucile Eris...

Ryner stared at the man before him with half-lidded eyes.

“.....”

The head of the Sword Family, hailed as this country’s strongest House.

If she hadn’t been ‘released’, would Ferris have turned into this as well?

The mad teachings beget mad creatures.

“That is... the strength of your determination?”

Ryner said.

Lucile heard that, slightly revealing a surprised expression.

“Oh... can you still talk to me without changing expressions? Life is as strong as a willow branch. You are completely different from Sion who forcefully came to see me. As if there wasn’t a slightest killing intent, calmly accepting everything... Is that you? The type that is usually unmotivated, completely uninterested in everything...”

But, Ryner interrupted him.

“I hate to be grouped like that by other people.”

Lucile laughed when he heard that.

“Me too.”

In that moment.

Nothingness suddenly appeared.

As if the killing intent had not existed from the beginning, **nothingness** appeared like that.

This was more challenging.

Ryner thought. This nothingness was even scarier than that strong killing intent.

...Slightly stronger than Ferris?

That was Ryner's own judgement.

Ferris was almost near the completed stage, but this power was at a level above hers.

Uh, no matter how much mad teachings they underwent, man's abilities were limited; and this man called Lucile, was probably within that boundary, but...

The problem was this, **nothingness**.

The problematic dimension was that it had escalated to the level where the presence could not be felt, or was soundless.

A bottomless **nothingness**.

What was...

Then, Lucile seemingly being able to look through Ryner's thoughts, said:

“Your ability is almost as strong as Ferris's? That's really impressive. You two are the best grouping. Actually thinking of teaming you and Ferris together, Sion really did something interesting.”

Ryner frowned when he heard that.

“This has nothing to do with whether it's interesting... Really, Sion that person was only intentionally causing trouble for me. I'll get straight to the point, what kind of education has your sister had? It's too violent.”

“Haha, it seems she has given you some trouble. Yes... That's right, perhaps

now it the time for her to learn to become a mature woman, she should act properly. But, uh, I am glad Ferris's companion is you. Ferris seems to be having fun every day."

Hearing that, in that moment, Ryner thought of Ferris's face.

But, what he recalled was her joyful look when she punched him...

"Ah... Uh, maybe she's happy. I haven't seen a person as free as her. From day till night, she hits me, hits me, continuously hitting me..."

Ryner said with an unhappy expression.

Lucile laughed again when he heard that, replying with a happy expression:

"But, I am really grateful that Ferris's companion is you. From today onwards can you continue to maintain this good relationship with her? And, aren't you moving to Estabul to protect Sion? I can't leave Roland... Can I entrust the two of them to you?"

This was the conversation between the two of them.

A conversation that flowed smoothly, like some sort of family drama.

Ryner nodded.

"Eh, uh, you don't have to deliberately request something of me... but, can I ask you something first?"

"Eh, what is it?"

"Uh, it's not something great... According to my investigation, you can only protect Sion within Roland, right? If Sion travels outside of the country, you cannot protect Sion... I think this kind of explanation doesn't seem to work. If you want to protect the king, you should be able to follow him to anywhere, right? But you didn't follow him. I was always concerned about the reason for this, it caused me to be unable to sleep... Ah, no, I'm speaking nonsense, I've been sleeping very well... But, anyway, I was very concerned about this. So, if you're willing to tell me what is the reason, I will follow your request, and protect Sion and Ferris well."

But Lucile heard that—

“.....”

He didn't reply, only continuing to smile...

Ryner continued:

“For example, is the reason something about the rules of the Eris House or something, so you cannot protect Sion?”

“.....”

Lucile still continued to smile.

“...Or, are there other reasons?”

Seeing that Lucile was not responding, Ryner still didn't give up.

He glared at Lucile who was smiling with a gentle—a really extremely steady expression.

“...The reason... oh yes, for example any chains... something like a curse or the sorts...”

Lucile heard that.

“A curse...?”

This was the first time that Lucile had a reaction, a smile still remained on his face.

And it seemed to be extremely happy.

“.....You mentioned something interesting. A curse...”

His tone didn't seem different from earlier, it was still as steady.

But... Ryner shuddered because of this.

The Lucile in front of him, was clearly a different person from just now...

No, this was another person!

Nothingness.

Nothingness expanded.

The bottomless **nothingness**.

That **nothingness** spoke— with that deliberate smile that seemed to be

pasted tightly on its face.

“Chains, and curses... How interesting. You’ve raised a very interesting issue. Why would you... think of that?”

Ryner tried hard to control his voice that was about to tremble unconsciously and said:

“It’s not what I think, I can see it. No, I should say that I can’t see it, I can’t see your body. Your body isn’t reflected in my **Alpha Stigma**...”

During their conversation, the **nothingness** still continued to spread out.

--Continuously expanding.

A smile deliberately crafted in the middle of that blankness...

Ryner glared at that smile.

“.....What on earth are you?”

So the voice replied:

“What are you saying, isn’t that a little rude. As you know, I am Ferris’s brother...”

“I’m not talking about this, Ferris is human, unlike you. What on earth are you...”

In that moment.

Lucile’s smile was even brighter than before.

But Ryner only saw that.

His presence vanished.

Suddenly, his body disappeared too.

His throat was strangled by something.

When Ryner found out that it was Lucile’s pale arm, he was already lifted up easily.

“Urgh... ah...”

It was an unbelievable strength that a human wouldn’t seem to have.

Ryner's neck was forcefully strangled, the other party had no intention of loosening his grip.

No, that strong power even made Ryner unable to have any thoughts of loosening that arm's iron grip.

Impossible!

He thought.

The problem didn't lie in whether he was able to react to that action.

Ryner didn't even know that the other party had moved.

He didn't even know what his opponent had done.

'Slightly stronger than Ferris'?

What had caused him to think of that?

"Urgh... ah, you you... ah..."

But, Ryner only said so much.

Lucile forcefully grabbed Ryner's neck, at the same time he laughed:

"Ferris isn't a monster? Ha, haha. Yes, yes. Aren't you clear about that? Ferris is human. She is different from me who has cursed blood flowing in me, and... you..."

At this moment, Lucile let go of Ryner.

"Cough... Urgh..."

Ryner was so weak at that point that he squatted down.

Lucile's voice travelled down from above his head.

"So it's best that you don't misunderstand this. You will never get her."

"...You, you... what are you saying..."

Lucile still continued:

"She is already... freed from this cursed bloodline.

From my bloodline.

And, freed from your bloodline.

You can't have her. I definitely wouldn't allow it."

"I, I'm asking you, what are you saying..."

But.

"...No, or perhaps I should say, a monster like you wouldn't be accepted by anyone, it would be easier to comprehend this way?"

"Ah..."

Hearing this.

Ryner was paralysed.

Monster.

Because this sentence.

"Cursed monster.

This sentence caused Ryner's vision to turn black.

It was **nothingness**.

An extremely large **nothingness**.

But, that **nothingness** didn't belong to Lucile.

It was spreading out from his heart, the bottomless **nothingness**...

Lucile smiled again, it was a smile like before.

But, that smile even seemed to imply something.

"What are you misunderstanding?

What did you come here to find?

Hope?

But, you should be most familiar, there isn't anything like that at all?"

The darkness spread out again.

Spreading out...

But, where was the darkness?

Was it before Ryner?

Or was it in Ryner's heart?

It was a dizzying darkness.

Only Lucile's voice resounded in the darkness...

"An ugly monster... what kind of dream that cannot be accomplished did you have?

You should clearly know.

Your monstrous hands stained with blood...

Is unable to grasp hold of anything.

Is unable to reach anywhere."

Only Lucile's voice resounded...

"But, you don't have to be depressed. Because of that, that is why I can relax and hand my sister to you.

Handing over my untouchable sister...

Being unable to touch anyone...

Even you who has no value in living.

I don't hate you. Ne, raise your head. And, I'll leave Ferris to you."

His words stopped—

Lucile vanished.

Ryner was left alone in the darkness again.

In the dark, dark dojo.

But.

“.....”

For a long while, Ryner was even unable to stand up.



The next day.

A letter was sent to Ryner who had woken up in the hotel.

A letter with no signature.

The contents of the letter was very simple, the contents in it were these:

Sion Astal hands three commands to Luke Stokkart:

Firstly,

Investigate, collect the Hero’s Relics that Ryner Lute, bearer of **Alpha Stigma** has left out.

Secondly,

Maintain surveillance on the bearer of **Alpha Stigma**, Ryner Lute.

Thirdly,

If the bearer of **Alpha Stigma**, Ryner Lute, loses control outside of the country, or behaves in a way to betray Roland...

Kill without hesitation.

That was the contents of this letter.

After Ryner read the letter... he raised his head.

He still had the usual unmotivated, lazy expression.

Using his usual lazy voice, he said:

“.....Is that so? It should be like that?”

He said softly.

Then he revealed a sad smile.

Afterword

The content of this story is largely different.

The development of the story has reached this volume, Ferris's past is also finally presented.

We have also started to touch on a few essentialities in Densetsu no Yuusha no Densetsu.

If readers are entertained by this, then I will be honoured by this.

About the discussion of the novel, I will write it in this style.

Following this, I will discuss about my latest situation.

In the recent events, I will leave the matter that made me feel very touched till the end...

Now, what should I say?

Ah, I wanted to start a website, but because I didn't have the time, so it was left incomplete.

What should I do? (Laughs)

When this book is on the market, can it be completed?

It probably wouldn't be possible...

But, in the near future it will be done, it will be officially released lately, those who see it, please react with 'I saw it!!'.

Ah, another topic has ended...

What should I do? The length for this volume's afterword is quite long.

Is there anything that I can write about? Urgh...

Ah, riddles!

Recently, there was an astounding riddle!

Everyone, listen to me!

It's about a movie.

And it's about the way to watch a movie at home, not watching a movie at a movie theatre.

Of course, it would be better to watch a movie at a movie theatre.

Even if you are unfortunate to watch a movie that does not suit your tastes and makes you feel bored, your memory after the event would still be "I went to the movie theatre to watch this film", it wouldn't feel all that bad.

But this isn't the important point about the riddle.

Eh.

But, if you're watching a movie at home, suddenly, the important riddle would appear!

And it appears in the middle of a marine film.

When I watched the marine film, in the beginning I would always change to Japanese dub, but...

My friend said upon seeing that:

"Eh? Dub? Something's wrong with you."

Has anyone heard something like this before?

This kind of situation usually happens around me.

I remember when I was in elementary school, a friend said:

"Turn on the subtitles! It's better with subtitles!"

Something like that...

That's where the riddle lies.

Why would people think that watching marine films would be better with

subtitles and not dubs?

Please note, when I watch marine films at home I try my best to watch in the form of DVD. This way, the Japanese dub and subtitles would appear at the same time.

This way it would appear more entertaining.

The content that was previously missed out because of the removal of subtitles, would appear accordingly because of the dub; if there are subtitles and dubs at the same time, then you would find that the original phrase (English or French) would appear differently.

It is really amazing.

For example, the lines of a particular work is like this!

The dub is:

“He is the savior!!”

But the subtitle is:

“It’s him!!”

And the original phrase is:

“He is the one.”

Of course the meaning of the above phrases are the same.

They pass on the same message, but the differences in how the phrase was presented... Not only that, there are some times that even the conjectures are different, it makes people have the doubt that “why would such a phrase appear in this scene?”.

But, in the making of every film there has been much hard work put into carefully selecting the phrases to use, in order for it to be a good film.

Which Japanese phrase can make it appear more vivid?

Which Japanese saying should be used, to make it even better?

Thinking about something like this has really been fun.

Frankly speaking, the testimonials are so different, that the subtitles and dubs can be an entirely new piece of work.

This way, if you can understand the original phrases in the film, we can even see three new pieces of work through different ways of illustration.

From this point of view, the problem of whether it is good or not would not concern the work that we see, every film is the best work!

That is what I think.

So, if I have the time, I will try my best to let the dub and subtitles appear at the same time, after seeing them, I will look at the original lines of the film again, the entertainment that I gain from this is hard to describe...

But, why would someone say that I have something wrong with my brain just by seeing me hear the dub?

Back to the main topic.

It is said, if there isn't any original phrases, the actors' skills and atmosphere would be unable to pass on to the audience truthfully.

But, if this is the reason to abandon the enjoyment of dubs, then it would be very regretful...

If possible, please look at the Japanese dubbed edition, and make a comparison, because it is truly interesting!

Uh.

The riddle hasn't been solved...

I have a few theories that are completely different from the previous reasons, but, they are all assumptions—

Assumption 1:

The inclination towards English.

Assumption 2:

Being unable to read subtitles when in kindergarten.

So the first time watching a movie with subtitles, will make one feel the

excitement of being like an adult.

--Something like that.

Uh, actually those are my own feelings. (Laughs)

But I feel that that's not only the case.

Eh... It really is still a riddle. What else?

If you have any opinions, please don't hold back!

In this case, let us now return to the topic that was mentioned earlier—

In the recent events, the one that made me feel touched.

It really was something that happened recently.

The letters that everyone write to me make me feel more touched than any novel or movie.

When I was very busy, almost had no sleep, and nearly giving up, the editor-in-charge Mr M continuously sent the letters from everyone... Thanks to that, I was saved.

Especially the letters that were sent in that period, they were all from reading the afterword of “Magical Bargain Sale”, showing strong agreement to the words that someone like me said, I felt like I was saved by everyone.

Because I was too grateful, I couldn't help but cry.

And there were people who didn't sign, only specially writing a letter to encourage me.

I'm always repeating myself, I feel really apologetic...

But, really, I was really saved.

Thank you.

Because there are people willing to read my work, so I can write an afterword like this.

Due to some reason, the cover and header of the special volume from Dragon Magazine will be out at the end of this month!

Other than that, in the October's edition of the Dragon Magazine additional issue "Battle Royal", "Military Lawyer Erwin" and "Densetsu no Yuusha no Densetsu" will be published at the same time!

And and, if the progress is smooth, the next "Densetu no Yuusha no Densetsu 7" will be published two months later, that means it would actually be released around October! (Editor: this is the situation in Japan.) Probably...

.....Urgh.

Please look forward to it!

I will continue to work hard, so as to not disappoint everyone...

Then, I will stop here.

Soon, we will meet again in the afterword in two months' time.

Takaya Kagami

Translator's Notes and References

Prologue 1

Niisama, Neesama, Tousama, Kaasama

↑ The 'sama (様)' honorific is used to address someone of a higher status formally. It is normally not used within normal families because it is too polite, but within families of higher class, stature, or of a strict upbringing, the usage is not uncommon, as can be seen in the case of the Eris House, a Greater Noble House of Roland. Niisama (兄様) is used for elder brother, Neesama (姉様) for elder sister, Tousama (父様) for father, and Kaasama (母様) for mother. Normally 'O (お)' may also be pre-pended to the form of address to either increase the formality, or make it more feminine.

Dougi

[↑](#) Dougi (道着) is a form of garment worn during martial arts training, and is normally made up of some kind of robe which is lightweight, comfortable and easy to move in. Dougi for judo would be known as Juudougi (柔道着), dougi for kendo would be known as Kendougi (剣道着), and so on.

Forward to Volume 5	Return to Main Page	Forward to Volume 7
-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------